

287g 10

THE
PARLIAMENTARY REGISTER:
OR,
HISTORY
OF THE
PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES
OF THE
HOUSE OF COMMONS
OF
IRELAND,

The THIRD Session of the FIFTH PARLIAMENT,
in the Reign of his PRESENT MAJESTY;

Which met at DUBLIN on the 19th of JANUARY, and ended
the 18th of APRIL, 1792.

VOL. XII.

DUBLIN:

PRINTED BY P. BYRNE, No. 108, GRAFTON-STREET,
AND J. MOORE, No. 45, COLLEGE-GREEN.

M,DCC,XCIII.



THE
N A M E S
OF THE
KNIGHTS, CITIZENS, and BURGESSES
ASSEMBLED IN PARLIAMENT.

ANTRIM COUNTY. (10)

RIGHT Hon. Jn. O'Neill.
Hon. Hercules Rowley.

Borough of Antrim.

Hon. Wm. John Skeffington.
Hon. Chichester Skeffington.

Borough of Belfast.

Hon. Henry Skeffington.
Hon. Joseph Hewitt.

Borough of Lisburn.

George Hatton, Esq.
John Moore, Esq.

Borough of Randalstown.

John Dunn, Esq.
Michael Smith, Esq.

ARMAGH COUNTY. (6)

Right Hon. William Brown-
low.
William Richardson, Esq.

Borough of Armagh.

George Rawson, Esq.
Right Hon. Major Robert Ho-
bart.

VOL. XII.

Borough of Charlemont.

Sir Annesley Stewart, Bart.
Richard Sheridan, Esq.

CARRICKFERGUS COUNTY and
TOWN. (2)

Ezekiel Davys Hamilton, Esq.
Alexander Hamilton, Esq.

CATHERLOUGH COUNTY. (6)

William Burton, Esq.
Henry Bruen, Esq.

Borough of Catherlogh.

Augustus Cavendish Bradshaw,
Esq.

John Ormsby Vandeleur, of
Kilrush, in the County of
Clare, Esq.

Borough of Old Leighlin.

Edward Cooke, Esq.
Patrick Duigenan, Esq.

CAVAN COUNTY, (6)

Charles Stuart, Esq.
Francis Saunderson, Esq.

Borough of Belturbet.

John M^cClintock, Esq.
Maurice Copinger, Esq.

Borough of Cavan.

Thomas Nesbitt, of Crossdo-
ney-Lodge, Esq.
Hon. Charles Fitz-Gerald,
commonly called Lord
Charles Fitz-Gerald.

CLARE COUNTY. (4)

Francis M^cNamara, of Moy-
reilk, Esq.
Hon. Francis Nathaniel Bur-
ton.

Borough of Ennis.

Right Hon. Sir Lucius O'Brien,
Bart.
Right Hon. Wm. Conyngham.

CORK COUNTY. (26)

James Bernard, Esq.
Hon. Robert King, commonly
called Lord Viscount Kingf-
borough.

Borough of Baltimore.

Sir John Freke, Bart.
Richard Grace, Esq.

Borough of Bandon-Bridge.

Broderick Chinnery, Esq.
Lodge Morris, Esq.

Borough of Castlemartyr.

Sir Jas. Laurence Cotter, Bart.
Charles O'Neill, Esq.

Borough of Charleville.

Right Hon. Sir John Blaquiére,
K. B.
Rogerfon Cotter, Esq.

Borough of Cloghnikeky.

Charles O'Neile, Esq.
Thomas Adderley, Esq.

City of Cork.

Right Hon. Richard Longfield.
Hon. John Hely Hutchinson.

Manor of Doneraile.

James Chatterton, Esq.
John Bagwell, Esq.

Town of Kinsale.

James Kearney, Esq.
William Rowley, Esq.

Town of Mallow.

Denham Jephson, Esq.
John Longfield, Esq.

Town of Middleton.

Thomas Pigott, Esq.
Arthur Dawson, Esq.

Borough of Rathcormuck.

Henry Duquery, Esq.
John Philpot Curran, Esq.

Town of Youghal.

Robert Uniacke, Esq.
James Uniacke, Esq.

DONEGAL COUNTY. (12)

Alexander Montgomery, Esq.
Henry Vaughan Brooke, Esq.

Borough of Ballyshannon.

Thomas Dickson, Esq.
Sir Michael Cromie, Bart.

Borough of Donegal.

William Downes, Esq.
Humphry Butler, Esq.

Borough of Killybegs.

John Wolfe, of Forenaughts,
Esq.
Right Hon. Sir Henry Caven-
dish.

Borough of Lifford.

Hon. Abraham Creighton,
commonly called Lord
Creighton.

Borough of St. Johnstown.

Hon. William Forward.
Hon. Hugh Howard.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

v

DOWN COUNTY. (14)

Hon. Arthur Hill, commonly
called Earl of Hillsborough.
Hon. Robert Stewart.

Borough of Bangor.

Sir John Blackwood, Bart.
John Keane, Esq.

Borough of Downpatrick.
Clotworthy Rowley, Esq.
Jonathan Chetwood, Esq.

Borough of Hillsborough.
William Montgomery, of Hills-
borough, Esq.
Robert Johnson, Esq.

Borough of Killyleagh.
Hon. Robert Ward.
James Stevenson Blackwood,
Esq.

Borough of Newry.
Isaac Corry, Esq.
Robert Rois, Esq.

Borough of Newtownards.
Hon. Richard Annesley.
John La Touche, Esq.

DROGHEDA COUNTY and TOWN. (2)

William Meade Ogle, Esq.
John Forbes, Esq.

DUBLIN COUNTY. (10)

Sir Edward Newenham, Knt.
John Finlay, Esq.

City of Dublin.

Hon. Henry Fitz-Gerald, com-
monly called Lord Henry
Fitz-Gerald.
Right Hon. Henry Grattan.

University of Dublin.

Arthur Browne, Esq. L.L.D.
Hon. Francis Hely Hutchin-
son.

Borough of Newcastle.

Right Hon. David La Touche.
David Latouche, Esq.

Borough of Swords.

John Claudius Beresford, Esq.
Lieutenant Gen. Eyre Massey.

FERMANAGH COUNTY. (4)

Colonel Mervyn Archdall.
Hon. John Willoughby Cole,
commonly called Lord Vis-
count Cole.

Borough of Enniskillen.

Hon. Arthur Cole Hamilton.
Richard Magennis, Esq.

GALWAY COUNTY. (8)

Wm. Power Keating Trench,
Esq.
Joseph Henry Blake, Esq.

Borough of Athenry.

Theoph. Blakeney, of Mulpit,
Esq.
Wm. Blakeney, of Castle Blake-
ney, Esq.

Town of Galway.

Right Hon. Denis Daly.
Right Hon. Sir Skeffington
Smyth, Bart.

Borough of Tuam.

Sir Thomas Leighton, Bart.
Jonah Barrington, Esq.

KERRY COUNTY. (16)

John Blennerhassett, Esq.
Sir Barry Denny, Bart.

Borough of Ardfert.

Robert Day, Esq.
Richard Archdall, Esq.

Borough of Dingle-Isle.

Richard Boyle Townsend, Esq.
John Townsend, of Shepperton,
Esq.

Borough of Tralee.

Crosbie Morgell, Esq.
Sir Boyle Roche, Bart.

KILDARE COUNTY. (10)

Hon. Edward Fitz-Gerald,
commonly called Lord Ed-
ward Fitz-Gerald.
Maurice Bagenal St. Leger
Keatinge, Esq.

Borough of Athy.

Lieut. Colonel Arthur Ormsby.
Frederick John Falkiner, Esq.

Borough of Harristown.

Sir Fitzgerald Aylmer, Bart.
Arthur Burdett, Esq.

Borough of Kildare.

Simon Digby, Esq.
Robert Graydon, Esq.

Borough of Naas.

John Bourke Esq.
James Bond, Esq.

KILKENNY COUNTY. (16)

Right Hon. W. Brabazon Pon-
sonby.
Walter Butler, Esq.

Borough of Callan.

William Meeke, Esq.
Nathaniel Warren, Esq.

*Borough of St. Canice, alias
Irishtown.*

Right Hon. John Monck Ma-
son.
Captain Marcus Beresford.

Borough of Innisfree.

George Ponsonby, Esq.
John Lloyd, Esq.

Borough of Gowran.

Patrick Welch, Esq.
George Dunbar, Esq.

City of Kilkenny.

John Butler, Esq.
Hon. William Cuffe.

Borough of Knocktopher.

Sir Hercules Langrishe, Bart.
Robert Langrishe, Esq.

Borough of Thomastown.

George Bunbury, Esq.
George Burdett, Esq.

KING'S COUNTY. (6)

Denis Bowes Daly, Esq.
Sir William Parsons, Bart.

Borough of Banagher.

Edward Hoare, of Cork, Esq.
John Metge, of Dublin, Esq.

Borough of Phillipstown.

William Sankey, Esq.
Arthur O'Connor, Esq.

LEITRIM COUNTY. (6)

Right Hon. Henry Theophilus
Clements.
Right Hon. Theophilus Jones.

Borough of Carrick.

Hon. Nathaniel Clements.
Edward King, Esq.

Borough of Jamestown.

Right Hon. Arthur Wolfe.
Henry Wood, of Rossmead, Esq.

LIMERICK COUNTY. (8)

John Waller, Esq.
Hon. John Maffey.

Borough of Askeaton.

Sir Joseph Hoare, Bart.
Henry Alexander, Esq.

Borough of Kilmallock.

Right Hon. John Armstrong
Peter Holmes, Esq.

City of Limerick.

John Prendergast Smyth, Esq.
Hon. Edmund Henry Pery.

LONDONDERRY COUNTY. (8)

Hon. Henry Beresford, commonly called Earl of Tyrone.
Right Hon. Thomas Conolly.

Borough of Coleraine.

George Jackson, Esq.
George Fitzgerald Hill, Esq.

City of Londonderry.

Sir Hugh Hill, Bart.
William Leckey, Esq.

Borough of Newtown-limavady.

John Staples, Esq.
John Richardson, Esq.

LONGFORD COUNTY. (10)

Laurence Harman Harman, Esq.
Sir W. Gleadowe Newcomen, Bart.

Borough of Granard.

John Ormsby Vandeleur, of Munster Nenagh, in the County of Limerick, Esq.
Thomas Pakenham Vandeleur, of Maddenstown, in the County of Kildare, Esq.

Borough of Laneshorough.

Gervase Parker Bushe, Esq.
Stephen Moore, of the Barn, Esq.

Borough of Longford.

Hon. Thomas Taylor, commonly called Lord Viscount Headfort.

Henry Stewart, Esq.

Borough of St. Johnstown.

George Cavendish, Esq.
John Taylor, Esq.

LOUTH COUNTY. (10)

Right Hon. John Foster, Speaker.

Thomas James Fortescue, Esq.

Borough of Atherdee.

William Parkinson Ruxton, Esq.

John Wolfe, of Newlands, Esq.

Borough of Carlingford.

Sir Charles Desvoeux, Bart.
James Blaquiére, Esq.

Borough of Dundalk.

Hon. Robert Jocelyn, commonly called Lord Viscount Jocelyn.

Hon. George Jocelyn.

Borough of Dunleer.

Nicholas Coddington, Esq.
Hon. John Foster.

MAYO COUNTY. (4)

Right Hon. James Cuffe.
Hon. Denis Browne.

Borough of Castlebar.

Edward Fitzgerald, Esq.
Lieutenant Colonel Francis Craddock.

MEATH COUNTY. (14)

Right Hon. Hercules Langford Rowley.

Gorges Lowther, Esq.

Borough of Athboy.

Hugh Howard, Esq.
Thomas Bligh, Esq.

Borough of Kells.

Hon. Thomas Pakenham, of Colure,

Hon. Robert Taylor.

Borough of Duleek.

William Knott, Esq.
Charles Montague Ormsby, Esq.

Borough of Navan.

Joseph Preston, Esq.

John Preston, Esq.

Borough of Ratoath.

William Irvine, Esq.

Gorges Lowther, jun. Esq.

Borough of Trim.

Hon. Arthur Wesley.

Hon. Clotworthy Taylor.

MONAGHAN COUNTY. (4)

John Montgomery, Esq.

Charles Powel Leslie, Esq.

Borough of Monaghan.

Right Hon. Lieutenant-General Robert Cunningham.

Cromwell Price, Esq.

QUEEN'S COUNTY. (8)

Right Hon. Sir John Parnell,
Bart.

John Warburton, Esq.

Borough of Ballynakill.

John Tydd, Esq.

Colonel Eyre Coote.

Borough of Maryborough.

Charles Henry Coote, Esq.

Samuel Hayes, Esq.

Borough of Portarlinton.

Richard Cavendish, Esq.

William Browne, Esq.

ROSCOMMON COUNTY. (8)

Sir Edward Crofton, Bart.

Arthur French, Esq.

Borough of Boyle.

Right Hon. Henry King.

Laurence Harman Harman,
Esq.*Borough of Roscommon.*George Sandford, of Castlereagh,
Esq.

Henry Moore Sandford, Esq.

Borough of Tulsk.

Right Hon. James Fitz-Gerald,

Henry Cope, Esq.

SLIGO COUNTY. (4)

Joshua Edward Cooper, Esq.

Charles O'Hara, Esq.

Borough of Sligo.

Robert Wynne, Esq.

Owen Wynne, Esq.

TIPPERARY COUNTY. (8)

Daniel Toler, Esq.

Hon. Francis Matthew.

*City of Cashel.*Richard Pennefather, of New-
park, Esq.William Pennefather, of Ath-
lone, Esq.*Borough of Clonmell.*Hon. Stephen Moore, com-
monly called Lord Kilworth.

Hon. William Moore.

Borough of Fethard.

Thomas Barton, Esq.

Daniel Gahan, Esq.

TYRONE COUNTY. (10)

James Stewart, of Killymoon,
Esq.

Hon. Thomas Knox.

Borough of Augher.

Thomas Coghlan, Esq.

Edmond Stanley, Esq.

City of Clogher.

Sackville Hamilton, Esq.

Richard Townshend Herbert,
Esq.*Borough of Dungannon.*

Hon. John Knox.

Hon. George Knox.

Borough of Strabane.

Sir John Stewart Hamilton,
Bart.
Hon. Henry Pomeroy.

WATERFORD COUNTY. (10)

Right Hon. John Beresford.
Sir James May, Bart.

Borough of Dungarvan.
Marcus Beresford, Esq.
Chambre Brabazon Ponsonby,
Esq.

Borough of Lismore.
Sir Richard Mulgrave, Bart.
Robert Paul, Esq.

Borough of Tallagh.
Colonel Hugh Cane.
John Egan, Esq.

City of Waterford.
Henry Alcock, Esq.
Robert Shapland Carew, Esq.

WESTMEATH COUNTY. (10)

Hon. Robert Rochfort.
William Smyth, Esq.

Borough of Athlone.
William Handcock of Will-
brook, Esq.
Sir Richard St. George, Bart.

Borough of Fore.
Hon. George Fred. Nugent,
commonly called Lord Del-
vin.
Major Stephen Freemantle.

Borough of Kilbeggan.
Thomas Burgh, Esq.
Wm. Sherlock, of Sherlockf-
town, Esq.

Manor of Mullingar.
Francis Hardy, Esq.
John Doyle, Esq.

WEXFORD COUNTY. (18)

Right Hon. George Ogle.
Hon. John Loftus Loftus.

Borough of Bannow.

Ponsonby Tottenham, of New
Ross, Esq.
Ephraim Carroll, Esq.

Borough of Clonmines.

Nicholas Loftus Tottenham,
of Ross, Esq.
Tankerville Chamberlaine, Esq.

Borough of Enniscorthy.

Vesey Colclough, Esq.
Mountfort Longfield, Esq.

Borough of Fethard.

Charles Tottenham, of New
Ross, Esq.
Thomas Loftus, of Ashfield
Lodge, Esq.

*Borough of Newborough, alias
Gorey.*

Charles Stanley Monck, Esq.
John Toler, Esq.

Town of New Ross.

Robert Leigh, of Rose Gar-
land, Esq.
Charles Tottenham, of Bally-
curry, Esq.

Borough of Taghmon.

Right Hon. John Hely Hutch-
inson.
Warden Flood, Esq.

Town of Wexford.

Richard Neville, Esq.
Francis Leigh, Esq.

WICKLOW COUNTY. (10)

Nicholas Westby, Esq.
William Hume, Esq.

MEMBERS, &c.

Borough of Baltinglass.

Hon. John Stratford.
Hon. Benj. O'Neil Stratford.

Borough of Blessington.

John Reilly, Esq.
Sir Richard Johnston, Bart.

Borough of Carysfort.

Sir Thomas Osborne, Bart.
Charles Osborne, Esq.

Borough of Wicklow.

Edward Tighe, Esq.
Wm. Tighe, of Kilcarr, Esq.

THE
PARLIAMENTARY REGISTER:
OR,
HISTORY
OF THE
PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES
OF THE
HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 19, 1792.

THE House being met according to the last prorogation, a message was brought down from the House of Lords by the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod—announcing to the Speaker, the presence of his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant on the throne in the House of Peers—and signifying his Excellency's pleasure, that this House do attend him there forthwith.

The Speaker, attended by the House, went up accordingly, and after a short interval returned, and read to the House a copy of his Excellency's speech to both Houses of Parliament, as follows :

" My Lords and Gentlemen,

" I have it in command from his Majesty to acquaint you, that, since the close of the last session, preliminaries of peace have been signed between Russia and the Porte, and those powers are now engaged in negociation for a definitive treaty, which his majesty trusts will complete the restoration of tranquillity amongst the different powers of Europe.

" His Majesty, convinced of the interest you take in whatever concerns his domestic happiness, commands me to acquaint you of the marriage of his Royal Highness the Duke of York and the Princess Royal of Prussia.

VOL. XII.

B

" Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

" I have ordered the proper officers to lay before you the national accounts; and I trust you will make such provisions as are necessary for the exigencies of the state, and the honourable support of his Majesty's government.

" My Lords and Gentlemen,

" The constant attention you have shewn to the interests of Ireland, makes it unnecessary to recommend to you a continuance of that wise system of policy, from which your country has received such inestimable advantages in the increase of her trade, her credit, and manufactures. It is equally unnecessary for me particularly to point out the encouragement of your agriculture, and attention to your linen manufacture. The Protestant charter-schools, and other charitable institutions will receive your accustomed consideration.

" You may be assured of my zealous co-operation to forward every measure that may contribute to the public welfare. I shall pay unremitting attention to the due execution of the law and the maintenance of good order and government, so essential to the continuance of that freedom, prosperity and happiness which Ireland enjoys under his Majesty's auspicious reign, and under our excellent constitution."

This speech being again read to the House by the clerk at the table, Lord THURLES rose, and in his maiden speech moved an address of thanks to his Majesty. His Lordship observed, that from a people who, for their loyalty, stood so eminently characterized as the Irish to a prince, from whose favour and benignity they had derived so many eminent blessings, expressions of gratitude were a natural offspring. He trusted therefore, that in expressing their joy for his Majesty's domestic felicity, one sentiment only should pervade the House; and that no other object would enter the minds of gentlemen on this occasion, that how they can most forcibly express their congratulations on his Majesty's happiness.

His Lordship then moved, " That an humble address be presented to his Majesty, requesting leave to approach his Majesty with the most dutiful and loyal professions of attachment to his royal person, family and government. To express the peculiar satisfaction we feel in the communication made from the throne in his Majesty's name, that since the close of the last session, preliminaries of peace have been agreed upon between Russia and the Porte, and that those powers are now engaged in negotiating for a definitive treaty, and that we learn with sincere pleasure that his Majesty trusts that tranquillity amongst the different powers of Europe will be thus completely restored. To assure his Majesty that he does justice to the feelings of his faithful Commons,

in expressing his conviction of the interest they take in whatever concerns his Majesty's domestic happiness; that we therefore come forward with the warmest expressions of congratulation upon the recent marriage of his Royal Highness the Duke of York with the Princess Royal of Prussia; and that we must ever feel the liveliest concern in every circumstance which can contribute to the lustre of his throne and afford additional stability and permanence to his august house. To assure his Majesty that he may rely with confidence on our cordial disposition to grant such supplies as the exigencies of the state, and the honour of his Majesty's government shall require. That when we reflect upon the continuing increase of our trade, our credit, our manufactures, particularly the linen manufacture, and when we consider the improvement and the extension of the agriculture of Ireland, we cannot fail to resort to those principles and measures of encouragement which have contributed to so much prosperity; and that we shall adhere with steadiness to that system of liberality and policy which, under his Majesty's auspices, has procured such inestimable advantages to this kingdom. Nor shall we fail in our attention to the Protestant charter-schools, and to those charitable institutions which have usually experienced our assistance and support. Sincerely to thank his Majesty for continuing in the Government a Lord Lieutenant, who has shewn a zealous disposition to forward every measure that may contribute to the public welfare. That we are convinced of his decided resolution to support the due execution of the law; and that under his firm administration we shall feel confident of the maintenance of good order and government, which are so essential to preserve that freedom, prosperity and happiness, which Ireland enjoys under her excellent constitution, and under the blessings of his Majesty's mild and benevolent reign.

Hon. G. KNOX. I rise to second the motion of the noble Lord, and it is with much pleasure that I see it brought forward by a person in whose illustrious birth, great wealth, and great consideration in the country, there is a powerful security that his public conduct will tend to the benefit of a nation, in whose prosperity he has so deep an interest. It would be a waste of time to urge any arguments to the House, to induce them to acquiesce in the proposed address—he that does not observe and feel the mildness and wisdom of his Majesty's government in general—he that does not rejoice, that the restoration of peace to the continent, has removed from us the apprehension of being ourselves involved in a war—or he who is not particularly satisfied that the probability of a failure in the Protestant succession is still further removed, would be little affected by any thing which I could utter.

For myself, I am glad of this opportunity of declaring my approbation of the present government and administration, under which the country has risen to unexampled and almost unhopcd prosperity—an administration, liberal and cautious—attentive to the interests of the community, without boast, or without bustle.—I am also happy, as every man in this House would be, to testify my loyalty to a sovereign whose praise I am ill qualified to speak, but whose praise it is unnecessary for me to repeat, since it lives in the hearts of all his grateful subjects.—But I am at this time particularly anxious to exemplify my regard for the minutest forms of the constitution, when opinions have, in other countries, but too successfully prevailed—not only destructive of all form, but subversive of all establishment.—That such opinions have had but little weight or currency in this kingdom, we owe as well to our admirable and almost perfect constitution, as to the temperate, yet anxious, circumspection of his Majesty's ministers.—But there are in all countries, and particularly in those, where speculative learning has sown its benefits and scattered its mischiefs—men, vain, visionary and misguided—men, needy, turbulent and desperate, to whom peace is pestilence, and the beautiful order of society, deformity.—If there should be a few obscure and contemptible individuals of that description in this kingdom, no observations of mine, shall drag them from that obscurity and that contempt, in which it is their nature to grovel.—One security, however, we shall always have, that if ever their silly and mischievous speculations should ferment into sedition, they will raise against them the strong arm of the law, and be crushed.

Right Hon. Mr. GRATTAN. I have no objection to concur in every thing honourable to his Majesty—and sincerely do rejoice in every circumstance which can really add to his public and private happiness.—I am sure every circumstance that can tend to increase that happiness, must give pleasure to every branch of his Majesty's subjects, and to none more sincerely than to his loyal people of Ireland, who must ever rejoice in the auspicious increase of the illustrious House of Hanover, whose accession to the throne of these dominions has been attended with so many blessings to this country, as well as every other part of the empire.—So far I am ready to concur in this address. In addresses of this kind, declarations of our readiness to support the different establishments of government are usual and perhaps unnecessary.—But I freely concur in that part of the declaration—and am not only willing to support those establishments, but even any new establishment which can add to the honour of his Majesty's reign, or the happiness of his family.—But to that part of the address which goes to declare thanks to his Majesty, for continuing in the government of this country a Lord Lieutenant and an administration whose measures I have found it necessary to oppose—and

who have uniformly opposed every measure urged for the good of this country—I cannot give my assent. It would be equally inconsistent and absurd for men first to have found it necessary to oppose uniformly the measures of an administration, and then to return thanks to his Majesty for continuing that administration.—To comply therefore in this part of the address with the unanimity the young nobleman recommends, would be to render the compliment of congratulation to his Majesty—a farce.

Either the opposition would appear insincere, or the address itself must appear so.—But I know better of one side, and I hope better of the other, than to imagine such a circumstance.—The measures of opposition have not been lightly taken up, nor will they lightly abandon the efforts we have already made. They were adopted in sincerity of heart, and have been maintained by uniformity of conduct—they were found necessary to preserve against corruption the balance of the constitution, and they have been supported by those most interested in preserving that balance.

It is now *ten years* since you recovered your constitution, and *three* since, in the opinion of some, you have lost it.—Your present ministers made two attempts on your liberties; the first failed, and the second has succeeded—you remember the first—you remember the propositions: the people of Ireland would not consent to be governed by the *British* parliament; an expedient was devised—let the Irish parliament govern the people of Ireland, and Britain govern the Irish parliament. She was to do so specifically in those subjects in which she had been most oppressive—monopolies of commerce *east* and *west*. We were to put down the Irish constitution in order to put up British monopoly against Irish commerce. The ministry who conducted this trick, took care to make the Irish advance by a certain number of propositions, under an assurance that the British cabinet would to an iota accede, and they made the Irish parliament give an additional revenue on the faith of that accession. They then suffered the propositions to be *reversed*—turned them against the country from which they were supposed to proceed, and made them fatal at once to her constitution, and to her commerce. The individuals concerned in this business, some of them had pledged themselves against an iota of alteration; they broke their honour. The Irish minister was pledged to a specific system, he prevaricated; in the attempt on her liberty he was a violator—in taking her taxes a *swindler*. This measure was defeated by the influence principally of that part of the aristocracy who refused to go through the bill, and *who have been dismissed*. They who made the attempt have been advanced and rewarded. The path of public treachery in a principal country, leads to the block, but in a nation, governed like a province, to the helm.

The second attempt was modelling of the parliament ;—in 1789, fifteen new salaries, with several new pensions to the members thereof, were created at once and added to the old overgrown parliamentary influence of the crown—In other words, the expenditure of the interest of half a million to buy the House of Commons—the sale of the Peerage and the purchase of seats in the Commons—the formation of a stock-purse by the minister to monopolize boroughs, and buy up representation. This new practice whereby the minister of the crown becomes the common borough-broker of the kingdom, constitutes an offence so multitudinous, and in all its parts so criminal, as to call for radical reformation, and exemplary punishment.—Whether the persons concerned be Lord Buckingham or his secretary, or those who became the objects of his promotion, because they had been the ministers of his vices.—It was a conspiracy against the fundamental laws of the land, and sought to establish, and has established, in the place of a limited monarchy, a corrupt despotism ; and if any thing rescues the persons so concerned from the name of traitors, it is not the principles of law, but its omission, that has not described by any express provisional statute, that patrieide of which these men in intention, and in substance, are guilty. They have adopted a practice which decides the fate of our parliamentary constitution. In vain shall we boast of its blessings, and of its three estates, the King, the Lords, and the Commons, when the King sells one estate to buy the other, and so contaminates both. The minister has sent one set of men packing into the Peers, and another set of men packing into the Commons ; and the first he calls the hereditary council, and the latter the grand council of the nation, and both, that once great and august institution—the Parliament. Such a condition, I say, puts the constitution of Ireland not below a republic, but any other form of genuine and healthy government—it is not mixed monarchy with parts happily tempered, and so forth—the cant of grave and superannuated addresses ; but a rank, and vile, and simple, and absolute government, rendered so by means that make every part of it vicious and abominable—the executive who devours the whole, and the other two parts which are thus extinguished—of such a constitution, the component parts are debauched by one another. The monarch is made to prostitute the prerogative of honour by the sale of honours—the Lords by the purchase ; and the Commons prostitute their nature by being the offspring not of the people, but of a traffic, and prostitute themselves again by the sale of their votes and persons.

I allow the British constitution the best, and I arraign this model as the worst, because practically and essentially the opposite of that British constitution. The British minister has given an account of the English constitution which he wishes to extend

to the Irish constitution—"Aristocracy," says he, "reflects lustre on the crown and lends support and effect to democracy while democracy gives vigour and energy to both, and the sovereignty crowns the constitution with dignity and authority—aristocracy is the poise," says he—"give an infusion of nobility." The minister here can answer him—He who sold the aristocracy and bought the democracy—he who best understands in practice what is this infusion of nobility—He who has infused poison into this aristocratic and this democratic division of power, and has crowned the whole with corruption. He well knows all this as far as Ireland is concerned, to be theatric representation, and that the constitution of the country is exactly the reverse of those scenes and farces which are acted on the public stages, of imposture and hypocrisy.

By this trade of Parliament the King is absolute—his will is signified by both Houses of Parliament, who are now as much an instrument in his hand as a bayonet in the hands of a regiment. Like a regiment, we have our adjutant, who sends to the infirmary for the old; and to the brothel for the young, and men thus carted as it were into this House to vote for the minister are called the Representatives of the People.—Suppose General Washington to ring his bell, and order his servants out of livery to take their seats in congress. You can apply this instance.

We have read a description of the late National Assembly of France. I can suppose something more degrading even than the picture—suppose an assembly, not ruled as it was suggested by a club of Jacobins, but by a Swiss major, who robbed the Treasury of France, and bought the assembly. You can apply this instance.

Mr. Locke has the following passage: "Such revolutions happen not upon every little mismanagement in public affairs—great mistakes on the ruling part—many wrong and inconvenient laws and all the slips of human frailty will be born without mutiny or murmur, but if a long train of abuses, prevarications, and artifices, all tending one way make the design visible to the people." Mr. Locke then states what the design is.

"What I have said concerning the legislature," he continues, is equally true concerning the supreme executive.—He acts contrary to his trust when he either employs the force, treasure, or offices of the society to corrupt the representatives and gain them to his purpose, or openly corrupts the electors and prescribes to their choice such, whom he, by solicitation, promises, or otherwise has previously won to his designs, and employs them to bring in such who promised beforehand what to vote and what to enact. Thus to regulate candidates and electors and new model the ways of election, what is it but to cut up government by the roots, and poison the very sources of public

security? For the people having reserved to themselves the choice of their representatives as a fence to their properties, could do it for no other end but that they might be always truly chosen, and so chosen truly act and debate as the necessity of the common-wealth should on examination be judged to require; and this, those who give their votes before they hear, are not capable of doing. To prepare such an assembly as this, and to endeavour to set up the declared abettors of his own will as the true representatives of the people, is certainly as great a breach of trust and as perfect a declaration of a design to subvert the government as can possibly be.

I must observe on this passage that, in the opinion of Mr. Locke, Parliament as well as Kings, may abdicate; and having quoted the passage, let me quote the declaration and confession of the Irish ministry: "half a million was expended by government, in 1769, to defeat the aristocracy—that is, to buy the representatives of the people, and gentlemen may now force government to expend a greater sum for the same purpose." I will now state the fact as appears from your establishment, and as you all allow it to be, the interest of about that sum was expended to buy the Parliament, and it was bought accordingly. I will state another account—a stock-purse was made by the minister, partly out of the sale of Peerages, to buy up seats in Parliament in order to introduce only such men as had previously agreed to vote with the minister, and both facts constitute severally or jointly what Mr. Locke calls "preparing" such an assembly as he describes, and setting up the abettors of the will of the minister, as the representatives of the people. Here is the present model—the trade of parliament instead of the constitution—see its effects: the strongest question that could be put to the nationality of the Commons, was that which related to the trade of Ireland with the East—The question was simply this; whether Ireland should exercise that trade, or individuals sell it to the minister of the crown, acting in Ireland as an agent to the East-India company, and after three debates it was determined for the company—*against* the country, by her own Parliament, under the influence of her minister, who proposed, that Ireland should be satisfied with the right, and leave the profits of the trade to the company—the country, by her exertions, had established the right, the individual, by corruption, sold the exercise.

It happened in 1779, that the claim of what they call Free Trade, had gone directly to the exercise, and not to the right: it said, that nothing but a free trade could save this country from impending ruin; meaning not a title to trade, but possession—it happened also, that when government, through the instrumentality of her Parliament, stopped the trade of Ireland to the unoccupied parts of the east, Spain interrupted the trade of England to the unoccupied parts in the north-west,

and stood with respect to England as government stood with respect to Ireland—with this difference—Spain was a natural and open enemy—the other carries on a war against the interest of her country with her own money, and under the trust and the name of her government.

There was a circumstance attending this treachery that made it still more mortifying—this very government had called upon Ireland for a vote of credit against Spain, and posted the Irish Parliament in the most extraordinary and degrading predicament, voting money to a war with Spain for interrupting the trade of England to the north-west, and assisting England in interrupting the trade of Ireland to the east—assisting government to do against Ireland that very act which she was to fight Spain for attempting to commit against Great Britain.

The question cannot end here; it is the cause of free trade and free constitution revived—that cause for which this country committed life and fortune—not for a barren right, but profitable possession—not to give a portion of it to the East-India company, still less to suffer their own servants to sell a portion of it to the company's agent resident here under the name of your ministers; least of all to suffer that very agent to draw back a portion of your trade by pilfering the treasury to buy the parliament, and to betray the late illustrious acquisitions of their country—on this principle might gentlemen give up the American-European colonial trade—it would be only a question about the quantum of money expended on the members, and the quantum of danger incurred by their notorious acts of bribery and dereliction.

The rejection of a responsibility bill, and still more the principles on which it was rejected, is another effect of the trade of parliament—to say, that without responsibility in the officers of state, there can be no limited monarchy, would be unnecessary in any enlightened country except Ireland; indeed the existence of responsibility is as essential to the limitation of the monarchy, as the existence of a King to monarchy itself, and yet when the servants of the crown argued against the bill, such ignorance did these men display, that they affirmed were the ministers of the crown responsible in Ireland, for what they did by the orders of the King, they were above him—Viceroys over him; and tattle of that sort:—these men who had been talking and talking about the British constitution, shewed they were misinformed both of the fact of the constitution in one country, and the principles of it in both.—It was thus La Manca's knight discourses about the perfections of his mistress whom he never beheld. As on the East India question they had resisted their Free Trade, so here they resisted their free constitution, and contended for absolute impunity in every abuse of power and prerogative that could be committed by the servants of the crown, and by none more likely

to be committed than themselves—acting under the authority of, the first magistrate.

They were the more inexcusable for this doctrine, because they had before them their own crimes—many of them sat in the House like gorgeous satraps, dressed in their own extortion—they had also in recollection the crimes of their predecessors, of those lord lieutenants and their secretaries whom these men had supported.—In 1769 the army was increased to 15,000 men, under compact to keep within the kingdom at all times, except invasion or rebellion in Great Britain, 12,000 men; and in 1779 you had not 5,000, and Government got your own consent to your nakedness—in 1773 a tenth was added to your revenues on compact to stop the further growth of debt, and in 1775 a new debt was presented to you—in 1785 new taxes were presented on specific estimates of all your expences, and every one of those estimates instantly, and ever since grossly and corruptly exceeded—in 1783, an addition is made to the place of the private secretary to the lord lieutenant, or compact that he is not to have a pension—He takes a pension, his successor keeps the addition, and the nation continues saddled with both.—In 1766, a King's letter is sent over promising a specific reduction of most of the offices in the ordnance.—in 1789 every word of the letter falsified, and every salary of those places increased for parliamentary influence. In 1773, a promise was made in consideration of new taxes to keep the boards of stamps and accounts united—In 1789, that promise is falsified, and they are divided for corruption. In 1773, the boards of revenue are united, and the number of the commissioners on compact reduced—and in 1789, the compact is broken for corruption.

In 1785, the ministers in the respective countries come forward with two sets of propositions—the Irish secretary produces one part of the plan as the ultimatum of government, and for that he gets your taxes; the English minister then produces the other part, and for this he asks your constitution; and Ireland like a poor traveller is glad to escape with her life and liberty after having been fleeced by two robbers.—I only state a few instances of perfidy out of a thousand instances of Mal-Administration

Carthage, or what the Roman historian has said of Carthage, has not exceeded your ministers in the fallibility of public honour. The ministers of this country have acted here on the principle of East-India adventurers; but here there is less vigour in the soil, and therefore less plunder in your government; send these men beyond the line—send them to Aurora and the Ganges, and that principle will be rapine—keep them to Ireland—it is speculation—it is the sale of the country for half a million—it is robbing the country to buy the parliament.

The persons who opposed the responsibility were therefore perfectly apprised of its necessity, they should have felt in the general principles of the constitution, they must have felt it in the particular abuses in the Irish constitution, they felt in their own particular situation, that the minister of Ireland, as our administration is at present constituted, has an interest opposite to the welfare of the country.—It was once the object of the Irish government to support the supremacy of the British Parliament; it is now their object to supply that supremacy, and establish the corruption of the Irish in its place.

What made these present men ministers? What, but a steady opposition to the independent exertions of parliament, and an activity to corrupt it. The liberty of the country has served the individual—it has made their treachery precious, and corrupt Irishmen must now do what powerful Englishmen did before them.

The constitution of Parliament may be divided into two parts—internal, which comprehends the existence of parliament—and external, which comprehends its creation;—as to the former it is not the mere existence, but the independency of its existence, wherein the freedom of the subject consists. To restore that independency a place bill was introduced. The Legislators—the purse-bearers—the grand inquisition and great council of the nation, had as little controul on the monarch as his beef-eaters. When the place bill was proposed and rejected—Brennus and the Gauls—The right honourable Gentleman was in your lobby with his mouth in every man's ear, and his touch in every man's palm—when gentlemen rejected that bill they did it in the paroxysm and agitation of their own pestilence.

By the rejection of the bill they seemed to declare, that the House had been bought, was bought, and should be bought again—Among other arguments against the bill, one was advanced by authority—that the bill would prevent the crown from combating aristocracy, by bribing the Irish parliament. What an argument for a radical application—for a decisive measure to bring back your constitution to its first principles!

This bill was rejected along with a pension bill—The pension lists so called are two, civil and military—but the real Pension lists are numerous—they distribute the bounty of the King among the corruption of the Senate—the licentiousness of the court and the enemies of the realm.—This is called a part of the dignity of the crown.—Corruption has not only reached the hearts of men—but it has debased their dialect—and our public language is become the speech of hypocrisy and imposture.

In rejecting both these bills, the ministerial language was, it is true, they are the laws of England, but they are not fit for the meridian of Ireland—this is much more than asserting that Ireland should not be free—it is asserting that England should

be free and Ireland should not—you may put the question of servitude in such a shape, as to disgust the pride of a Cappadocian. The lot of Ireland, according to this reasoning, becomes particular degradation—We bear misfortunes patiently because they are the portion of man—but if they were the inheritance of you and of me only—if the imperfection of the dispensations—ordinances, and decrees of nature were visited on one tribe of the human species—if Providence had spoken like the ministers of our country—these blessings are very well for others, but they are too good for *your meridian*. I fear that the tribe so cast off would turn to execration, and till Providence shall mark its divine displeasure by inflicting some visible opprobrious distinction on the people of Ireland, confirming the argument of their minister, and denoting its intention to degrade us, I must to such logic remain a disbeliever. It was once in this country—"equal fate and equal freedom;"—the stile is now changed a little—equal fate.—i. e.—equal fall, but inferior freedom—inferior freedom and superior profligacy.

With the same view to save the internal purity of parliament, we proposed a resolution, tending those ministers of the Crown, employed in the sale of Peerages. They have made the honorific prerogative a nuisance—they have endeavoured to disgrace one House of Parliament, and to model both—they have invited the rabble to tread upon the nobles; and if this House had done its duty, some of those gentlemen now on the treasury bench should be lodged in the tower.

I have said the constitution may be divided into two parts—internal and external: to preserve the former we introduced those measures, and with a view in some degree to diminish the corruption of the latter we introduced a bill for disqualifying revenue officers from voting at elections—the bill did no more than what the principles of the Constitution required, and no more than England already had done by statute. It prevented from interfering in election, a set of men who are in a most absolute manner dependant on the will of a minister; men who have from their office the power to harass and oppress the freedom of other electors, while they have no power to act with freedom themselves: they are so many votes taken out of the democratic scale, and thrown into that of the other side, and instead of adding to the number of free electors, are so many votes to be deducted from thence. The disqualifying bill was more necessary in Ireland, because the persons concerned in the revenue sit in parliament: your collectors are members—your commissioners are members—are, in some cases, of course to try their own constituents. They are not only members—they are ministers—they are not only ministers—they are borough patrons, and form a great aristocratic influence by virtue and abuse of their commissions.

The trade of parliament is like original sin—it operates through all political creation, and would lead me to various other instances in which this country has been deceived and exhausted, and in no instances more frequently than in the artifices whereby this trade has endeavoured to sustain itself. You remember the 140,000*l.* and the three-fold falsehoods annexed—trade—equalization of expence—and non-accumulation of debt.—The first promise failed at the outset—the equalization, the second promise, was also falsified—the government falsified every one of its own estimates, not of necessity, as has been suggested, or from national charges imposed, but voluntarily, prodigally, and corruptly.—I'll remind them of some of their expences; do they remember the prodigalities of your pension in 1786, and the profusion of their park expences, at which the ministers laughed, when they voted? Do they remember the corruptions of Lord Buckingham, which corruption the gentlemen acknowledged when they voted for the third promise—Non-accumulation of debt fails—when that of equalization fails, the minister who is guilty of exceeding, is guilty of debt, and not he who provides for it—they get a lottery which is a resource to debt to supply the current corruption of the year, and they introduce this lottery under colour of diminishing the interest of the loan, and when established apply the annual amount to the establishment; they had gotten 140,000*l.* taxes, 80,000*l.* lottery; this won't do, they get a gross sum of 60,000*l.* from the bank, and instead of applying to liquidate, give it to the establishment—80,000*l.* per ann. lottery, 60,000*l.* bank.—For what? in the trade of Parliament they raise another revenue—the new duties on spirit.

They raised the duty just to that criminal and critical point which left the intoxication, and increased the revenue, to take away at once the understanding of the people and their money; the increase of the duty on whiskey, they made an excuse for raising the duty on rum; as that duty stood before, it was higher than the proportion. In England the proportion is about 1 to 3, in Ireland 2 to 3; violating the proportion he professed to observe, to filch the revenue he pretended to abjure, he had engaged to encourage the brewery, as he had promised to depress the spirit; and was as fallacious on the encouragement of the one, as in the depression of the other—his whiskey was to be rendered unattainable by raising it a farthing a pint; strong beer was to be brought into consumption by lowering it the 100th part of a farthing a quart; here is his ultimate line of encouragement and depression of bringing a wholesome beverage into general use, and banishing a poison—the Minister had filched by this trick, his drawback on the loan, which was 70,000*l.* he had filched what was estimated at about 40,000*l.* beside on spirit, and in consideration of this he offers you beer at 3*d.* a barrel, reduced price. The fact is, the price of beer is now increased—the gentlemen

who first proposed, disclaimed the business, and saw the duplicity—they had determined not only to give the brewery decisive advantage, by lowering the duty, but by taking off restrictions on the trade. I pass over the false measure, by which the brewer is now taxed and aggrieved: hear how they have taken off the restrictions—by adding to them—they have imposed a new restriction affecting the quantity of liquor each brewer is to make, and to exclude the smaller brewer from the trade, they add a new restriction, and they left one of the worst of the old—the division of the breweries.

On the same plan of encouragement, he agreed to permit the importation of foreign hops. We had kept down our brewery in compliment to the brewers of London—we put it under inconveniences in compliment to the hop-growers of England—we had excluded all foreign hops and this monopoly of our consumption, our negociators of the propositions stated not as a favour to England but an obligation to her—they have since changed their opinion, and learned that Flanders may grow hops as well as England.—They agreed therefore that foreign hops should be importable at 3d. per lb. which is twice as much as the duty on English; and then, in mockery of what they themselves had agreed to, they proposed in that repository of unconstitutional matter—the revenue bill—a clause which prohibited the import of foreign hops except when British amounted to 9l. the cwt.—so that however dear—however bad the English hops might prove, you must take them unless they come to such a price that England cannot export them.—Here is the fatal hand of an Irish cabinet legislating against Ireland to promote its own credit in the court of Great Britain.—Thus stands the conduct of the minister.—On this subject he had disclaimed revenue—he had filched what estimated at above 100,000l.—he had professed to stop the use of whiskey—he had raised it $\frac{1}{4}$ d. the pint—he had professed to preserve the British proportion in the duty of rum—he violated that proportion—he had professed to give the brewery decisive encouragement by lowering the duty on beer—he sunk the duty the hundredth part of a farthing a quart—he had proposed to leave the brewer free; he left one grievous restriction and added another—he had professed to agree to permit the import of foreign hops; he fixes the line of permission at an impossible price. These measures were too bad, and therefore it became necessary to do something bearing a resemblance to what he had professed—the discouragement of the use of spirits. He therefore borrows from a right honourable Gentleman a bill of regulation—that bill, every efficient part of which is the formation of the right honourable Gentleman, is the only measure that gives any chance of relief from that situation to which the duties adopted by the ministry lead—an increase of revenue and a continuation of drunkenness.

From what I have stated of the situation of your parliament, and from the conduct of that parliament, under the influence of such a situation, your political liberty is in much danger.—What is the state of your civil liberty? Four actions are brought for certain publications against one printer, and without specifying any loss they lay their damages to the amount of 8,000*l*. The judge grants different fiats to oblige the printer to give bail to that amount—and the printer, unable to furnish such bail, is committed to prison; here is, by the judge so acting, a breach of the great charter—he deprived the subject of his liberty in a case which deprived the press of its freedom, and he did this against a positive clause in Magna Charta, which forbids excessive bail, and he did this on a principle which would enable him equally to deprive every other subject in the kingdom of his freedom against whom any action, however frivolous, was brought.

The printer having suffered almost to ruin under an arbitrary judgment, became a subject for parliamentary enquiry—but here a person, much more criminal than the judge—the minister stands forth—he comes with all the patronage of the crown to screen from justice all these attacks on the liberty of the subject, and the liberty of the press. But was it friendship—was it private tenderness; no, he betrayed the judge in the moment, and in the manner of defending him—he confessed the crime when he screened the criminal—the ministry are enemies to the inquisitorial power of the people—a proceeding against an erroneous judge might be a precedent against an hot—an intemperate and an arbitrary minister—they who had libelled the people of Ireland as gross and stupid, would not like to see that people exercise their inquest over the worst or even the best of judges. The people might question the sale of the peerages, they might question the expenditure of the half million—they might question the attack on the rights of the city—when therefore the minister screened the judge—it was partly on a principle that the House of Commons should not proceed against state offenders—it was not that they hated the judge *LESS*, but that they hated justice *MORE*—the honourable mover said he dropped the question—I think him right.—The offence of the judge is washed away—he has been punished in the treachery with which he has been defended—he has been punished in having a rival, his patron, and the right honourable gentleman his advocate: as his offences are washed away—so are they eclipsed by the crime of the ministry—that minister, who, systematically and deliberately bad, could screen with the influence of the crown—a judge whose offence they acknowledge—whose character they betray—whose authority they undermine, and whose power they continue.

The ministry, for whose continuation you are now to thank the King, have not only attacked civility by protecting the errors of judges, but by making their seats part of the patronage of the

minister in the House of Commons—a respect for the constitution is fatal to the pretensions of a lawyer—a disregard for liberty is a qualification sufficient for him—the barrister is brought from his studies in the hall, to his compliances in the senate—in vain shall the minister assume a regard for the common law, to apologize for his contempt for the constitution when he undermines the law as well as that constitution, by making a corrupt political traffic of both, and mortgages the seats of justice, to reward parliamentary compliance—it is worse than an illegal opinion, or an attack on corporal rights—it is sowing the seeds of illegality, in the very bed of justice. That minister who makes the law arrangement a part of parliamentary patronage, sells the seats of justice; he who sells the seats of justice, sells the law; and he who sells the law of the country, sells his loyalty.

I shall be told of many learned men of the law, sitting in this House. I make not the least doubt, but if it is neither repute nor learning, but the tender of both at the feet of the minister, that must raise them to the bench, I condole with them, and still more with their country.

There are various instances in which the corruption of the senate touches the condition of private life, instances which cannot be well pronounced, to attack either the political or civil liberty, yet accomplish an abundance of mischief; the police establishment of the city of Dublin, repeatedly patronized by the present administration, is of this nature, an institution planned to corrupt your magistracy and to procure a guard which neglect, insult, and has committed robbery on the citizens; they applied for redress and found in government an accomplice; the charge for this public nuisance has been, since its establishment, near 100,000*l*.

The rejection of the barren land bill is another subject, where the trade of parliament has touched the private interest of men and the intended oeconomy of the country, a subject, if compared to what has been mentioned already, a trifle—but as explanatory of principle, a volume. The bill provided, that lands which, by reason of their barrenness, had been exempt from tithe, should continue so for seven years, notwithstanding their cultivation; the principle of this bill was an immediate addition to the income of the kingdom, and a reversionary addition to that of the church: upon its principle it was rejected by the influence of government, and of that very government who had before declared the bill to be the best ever brought into parliament. Three bills had been introduced in 1788, one for rape, another for flax, and a third for barren land. The ministry compromised, that two should be sacrificed to the bishops, and one should be conceded to the country. They went farther, and their Attorney-General declared, that the bill in question, viz. the barren land bill, was the best ever brought into parliament; and he took on himself the modelling

some clauses to secure the assent of the bishops—the bishops, or some who led them, were then supposed to have broken faith with government, as government after broke its engagement with the country, and rejected this very best of all possible bills on the worst of all possible motives—for the votes of the bishops in parliament. For that, they, the ministers, sold this bill—they sold it to the lords spiritual, just as they had before sold their honours to the lords temporal. Such a step would scarce be credible, except under an administration who had prevaricated on the subject of the propositions, under whose venal auspices seats of justice, peerages, the establishment, and now the bills and proceedings of Parliament, like their own talents and activity, were all sold for parliamentary compliances.

I congratulate the church on its alliance with such ministers of the crown: but let me assure them it will not serve their promotion, they live under an administration which has but two principles of promotion—for church or law—or any thing—
ENGLISH RECOMMENDATION and IRISH CORRUPTION.

What is the case of doctor Kirwan? That man preferred our country and our religion, and brought to both a genius superior to what he found in either—he called forth the latent virtues of the human heart, and taught men to discover in themselves, a mine of charity, of which the proprietors had been unconscious; in feeding the lamp of charity he had almost exhausted the lamp of life; he comes to interrupt the repose of the pulpit, and shakes one world with the thunder of the other: the preachers desk becomes the throne of light—around him a train—not such as crouch and swagger at the levees of princes—nor such as follow the procession of the viceroys—horse, foot and dragoons, but that wherewith a great genius peoples his own state; charity in extacy, and vice in humiliation—not as with you in cabinet against the people—but in humiliation—vanity, arrogance, and saucy empty pride, appalled by the rebuke of the preacher, and cheated for a moment of their native improbity and insolence.

What reward? St. Nicholas within or St. Nicholas without. The curse of Swift is upon him to have been born an Irishman—to have been a man of genius—and to have used it for the good of his country. Had this man, instead of being the brightest of preachers, been the dullest of lawyers—had he added to dullness, venality—had he aggravated the crime of venality, by his senatorial situation, he had been a judge—or had he been born a blockhead, bred a slave, and trained up in a great English family, and handed over as a household circumstance to the Irish viceroy, he would have been an Irish bishop and an Irish peer, with a great patronage, perhaps a borough, and had returned members to vote against Ireland—and the Irish parochial clergy must have adored his stupidity and deified his dullness. But under the present system, Ireland is not the element in

which a native genius can rise, unless he sells that genius to the court, and atones by the apostacy of his conduct for the crime of his nativity. *Unde derivata hæc clades?* in four words I will tell you: in the trade of parliament: it is a matter to consider, how a man bred up in the school of liberty, how a foreigner would speak to you ON YOUR PRESENT SITUATION—he would perhaps address the gentlemen of this house in the following manner—"You put on the sword, and would have drawn it for your freedom, and failing, you had died in the field, or had bled on the scaffold—in that event, the Attorney General on the part of the crown, had prosecuted, and the Chief Justice had pronounced sentence, and the boys of your court would have shouted at the execution of the patriots.—How comes it that of the men that would have been your executioners, some of them have become your ministers? Your madness is not become a general disease, we do not find that the English after their revolution made father Peter archbishop of Canterbury, or that general Bender has placed Vandernoot at the head of the Imperial army—America had enemies, but she disposed of them in a different manner; you have put into commission your enemies, and you have banished your friends—we see with astonishment, and in it we blush for the abortive efforts of national spirit; the mortifying insignificance of public opinions and the degrading contempt into which the people of your country have fallen, with all their shouts and addresses. We see your old general who led you to your constitution, march off—dismissed by your ministry as unfit to be trusted with the government of a county—the cockade of government struck from his hat.—That man whose accomplishments gave a grace to your cause, and whose patriotism gave a credit to your nobles, whom the rabble itself could not see without veneration as if they beheld something not only good but sacred—the man who drooping and faint when you began your struggles, forgot his infirmity, and found in the recovery of your constitution a vital principle added to his own—the man who smit with the eternal love of fame and freedom, carried the people's standard till he planted it on the citadel of freedom—see him dismissed from his government for those very virtues, and by that very ministry for whose continuance you are to thank the king.—see him overwhelmed at once with the adoration of his country, and the displeasure of her ministers.—The history of nations is often-times a farce—what is the history of that nation that having, at the hazard of every thing dear in a free constitution, obtained its mistress, banishes the champion and commits the honour of the lady to the care of the ravisher? There was a time when the vault of liberty could hardly contain the flight of your pinion; some of you went forth like a giant rejoicing in his strength; and now you stand like elves, at the door of your own pandemonium. The armed youth of the

country, like a thousand streams thundered from a thousand hills, and filled the plain with the congregated waters in whose mirror was seen for a moment the watery image of the British constitution—the waters subside—the torrents cease—the rill ripples within its own bed, and the boys and children of the village paddle in the brook.”

Sir, whenever freedom shall be properly understood, depend upon it the gentlemen of this country will be ashamed of the condition they bear, and the questions they have made upon it—in the mean time I can account for their patience—the Irish are accustomed to be trodden upon—uniformly, says Junius, has Ireland been plundered and oppressed. It is not so in England:—defective in some particulars, as the constitution of England may still be, yet with all those defects England has a constitution, and she has also maxims as well as laws to preserve it—they have not been blessed in England with a succession of lord lieutenants, secretaries, whose sole occupation has been to debauch the political morality of the gentlemen of the island—no minister will venture to tell the gentlemen of England that they must be bought—no man will venture to say that the best minister is he who buys parliament the cheapest. Men do sometimes desert and oppose their own party—but not themselves and their own list of measures—a man does not in England publicly cross the house to reverse every part of his conduct, and then hold out his little paw to the minister like a penny boy. There was indeed one man in England supposed to have done so; but he was in England a prodigy—let me add he was an Irish secretary.

The people of this country suppose that England acceded to their liberties, and they were right; but the present ministry have sent the curse after that blessing—hear the curse! “You have got rid of the British parliament, but we will buy the Irish—you have shaken off our final judicature; but we will sell yours—you have got your free trade, but we will make your own parliament suffer our monopolists in one quarter of the globe, to exclude you; and you shall remain content with the right, destitute of the possession.

“Your corporate rights shall be attacked, and you shall not stir—the freedom of your press and the personal freedom of the subject shall be outraged, and you shall not arraign—your city shall be put under contribution to corrupt its magistracy, and pay a guard to neglect and insult her—the seats of justice shall be purchased by personal servitude, and the qualification of your judges shall be to have borne their suffrage and testimony against the people. Taxes shall be drawn from the poor by various artifices to buy the rich—your bills, like your people, shall be sold you shall see the genius of your country neglected—her patriotism dismissed from commission, and the old enemies of your constitution made the rulers of the realm.”

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said, he was not surprised that the right honourable gentleman, for want of other matter, should recapitulate the accumulated invective of many sessions: but he would be extremely surprised, indeed, if this invective, so often refuted, should make any impression upon the house. If the right honourable gentleman supposed he would follow him through all that maze of charges, of propositions, of malt duties, of police, of India trade, and all that strange incongruous jumble, calculated to poison the public mind, he would at this day request to be excused—they had been already refuted, and if they were brought forward in the course of the session they would be refuted again. When the right honourable gentleman imputes to government crimes that would disgrace an individual, a government conscious of its integrity, must disregard the imputation;—but when he lightly charges parliament, he lowers parliament in the eyes of the public, and does a positive injury to the country.—Since 1779, which he fixes as the commencement of depravity, the parliament of Ireland has done more for the benefit of the kingdom than all the antecedent parliaments from the days of Henry the II. In this space the country has advanced to a degree of prosperity un hoped for, even by the most sanguine; yet this is the very period the right honourable gentleman thinks fit to depreciate, by which he may do an evil that certainly he does not intend.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer was followed by Colonel Blacquiere, to the same effect.

Mr. SHERIDAN said, he heard that an opposition to an address at the commencement of a session was a most hopeless attempt—he believed so—a silly good nature secures what is called an address, and with-holds the negative of many, who during the course of a preceding session, have fought and struggled with a government, which in the succeeding session, they patiently and silently hear flattered and approved in the name of the commons of their country.—Such conduct, in his apprehension, was spiritless and inconsistent.

If it could be deemed respectful to the gentlemen who propose, and to the gentlemen who support such addresses, to consider them as compositions having lost their meaning in their abuse, as compliments permitted, not approved, as mere parliamentary etiquette on meeting—no more—something like a polite bow to an adversary in the field, before you fire at him; he should be silent on the language of ceremony, and consider such as much of course, and as cheap as the answers returned. But he requested gentlemen to recollect that such addresses conveyed the character of government, that they were forwarded to the sovereign, disseminated through the country, entered on the

journals, and became recorded certificates of the good conduct of administration; and this at a time when the public knew and felt nothing of that administration but benefits withheld and injuries sustained.—May not the friends of the people say to this government with truth, we drew upon you in favour of the public, for several national advantages, which if obtained, had been important auxiliaries to the constitution. *Did you accept a single bill?* Is opposition so low in character, so small in consideration, and so humble in talents, as not to have credit with you for *one* measure? You rejected a responsibility bill, in the very sessions that the Atlas of the Exchequer had thrown responsibility off his shoulders. You rejected a place bill. You rejected a pension bill, founded on the pension list; that satire on generosity, and libel on royal bounty. You rejected a bill purporting to prevent revenue officers voting at elections; in this you were the less excusable, for such is the law of England. In England, where the chief commissioners of the revenue are no part of the administration—in England, where they keep their due distance with the government, and therefore have the less influence: but in Ireland, where the chief commissioners are, or at least appear to be, and that pretty forward too, a part of the administration,—the bill is refused. You would not suffer this invidious dissimilitude between the two countries to be removed—you rejected or refused any alleviation in that odious system, the police, so odious that no citizen connected with it can obtain any civic honour; in this you were the more honourable, because it must be conceded to you, that the influence arising from this establishment is not worth the tenth of the disgrace by which you purchase it. When from universal clamour and general belief that the prerogative of the crown had been abused, and the house of lords disgraced by the sale of peerages, enquiry was sought, nay, challenged—you extinguished enquiry; your eyes were sore and sickly on the subject and could not bear the light—for these and many more such like courtesies, we are to vote you thanks and supplies. With such grounds for negative, he could not vote for any address, countaining any compliment to the government here;—he considered the present administration in this country a continuance of the last, a chapter in the same work, pursuing the same plan, inculcating the same doctrine, opposing the same measures, and little improved in stile. One reason he confessed might spring from this consideration, to vote even the continuance of lord Westmorland; the possibility that if he were removed, his immediate predecessor might be returned to us.

He submitted to the good sense of the house, having but one opinion as to his majesty and his family, whether it would not be more respectful to the king, and more complimentary to the occasion, to address singly on the subject of his royal highness

the duke of York's marriage: he saw no reason for introducing the lord lieutenant in such an address, unless indeed the minister wished to shelter himself in the honey-moon of matrimonial congratulations.

Mr. Sheridan then moved, "to expunge that part of the resolution relating to Lord Westmorland."

Sir HENRY CAVENDISH said, if ever any administration should avail themselves of the talents of the honourable gentleman who spoke last, to draw up an address, he would doubtless introduce into it a paragraph similar to that he now condemned; he was convinced he would do so, because it was perfectly regular and perfectly right. Differing, however, as he did with the honourable gentleman upon the present motion, it was but justice to declare his approbation of the parliamentary and gentlemanlike language the honourable member had used: he had not suffered his imagination to run away with his understanding; he had not used any idle, unnecessary, or abusive language, more fit for the regions of Billingsgate than the walls of parliament; but he had spoken in a manly, becoming style—and even those who rejected his principles, must respect his manner.

The poet has declared (continued Sir Henry) that

"The government that's best administer'd, is best,"

Let us try lord Westmorland's administration by this rule. Are manufactures promoted? Has credit increased? Does industry flourish? Are the people employed? Is the landed interest advanced? In a word, is the nation more prosperous than at any former period?—If every man that speaks truth, and who does not repine at our happiness, will answer these questions in the affirmative—then is lord Westmorland's administration a good administration, and ought to receive our praise.

Mr. GRATTAN said, the right honourable baronet [Chancellor of the Exchequer] who spoke second in debate, is much mistaken if he hopes that he shall hear no more of the misconduct of brother-ministers; on the contrary he shall be reminded of it repeatedly. He speaks of coming to particulars; we wish to come to particulars of their offences; we wish, for instance, for a committee, to enquire into the sale of peerages, but that is a particular he wished to avoid and cannot deny. He speaks of the 140,000*l.* as my measure—it was the minister's measure, on a condition in which he afterward broke his word—he speaks of the regulation of spirits; the idea indeed of attempting by regulation of duty to check general intoxication, was that of a right honourable friend of mine—the disappointing that idea was the act of the minister.

Another right honourable baronet [Sir Henry Cavendish] has dropt some words in allusion to the debate—he talked of extra matter—what is the question? Thanks for the continuation of the lord lieutenant—and what is that matter which the baronet calls an extra dissertation on his measures? It seems the right honourable baronet is ignorant of the only subject he is supposed to be acquainted with—ORDER. He talks of scurrilous language—his language and epithets return on himself.—But a man's language is of little moment—it is his CONDUCT that is essential.—What shall we say of the conduct of that man who voted in ONE session FOR a pension bill and AGAINST it in the next—of that man, who voted FOR a place bill in one session and voted AGAINST it in the next—of that man who voted for a committee to proceed towards impeachment against the present ministry for the selling peerages, and the very next session votes for thanks to that very ministry.—What does he think of such an apostate?

Sir EDWARD NEWENHAM said, he rose to support the address; for it was a proper declaration at this important crisis of affairs, that the whole nation might know, that their representatives were determined to support the present happy establishment in state and church; that he had supported all popular questions both in and out of parliament for a long series of years, and had lived to see most of them carried into effect for the good of his country, and improvement of its constitution; that he had been a faithful labourer to those head masons, who raised the temple of Irish liberty; that he and his fellow labourers had collected materials in distant counties and cities, and brought them to the capital, where the master-masons made proper use of them. He said that the constitution wanted some improvement, which he would support at a more calm and settled season, but would never injure the main building; that he had supported all the popular measures of the right honourable member, and would to the latest period of his life support a repeal of that police law, which was so injurious to the virtuous and loyal citizens of Dublin; that he would support a place and pension bill, and a proper reform of parliament, these were his principles, and by these he would stand while he had the honour to represent the county of Dublin. He was fixed to that constitution, which was obtained by the glorious revolution in 1688, and which constitution placed the illustrious house of Hanover on the Irish throne. The address which supported those principles had his hearty concurrence.

Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY said, that he would not have risen but for something which had fallen from his friend the honourable baronet (Sir Edward Newenham) respecting the critical situation and seditious temper prevailing in this country: for his part

he knew of no such things, but if the honourable baronet had made any such discovery and would explain it to the house, he for one, if the chief governor could be strengthened by panegyric, would have no objection to give him all the praise that his warmest admirers could desire.

The address was carried without a division.

The honourable Mr. LOFTUS moved an address of thanks to the lord lieutenant, for his speech, which was seconded by Mr. Cavendish Bradshaw, agreed to, and a committee appointed to draw it up.

Sir HERCULES LANGRISHE gave notice, that he had a proposition of great importance to bring forward, which he should do at a convenient time, and in the discussion of this business he should call on the house for their assistance; the measure he alluded to, was a proposition for the relief of the Roman Catholics of this kingdom.

Mr SECRETARY HOBART said, that he was acquainted with the proposition which the honourable baronet intended to submit to the consideration of the house, and it was a proposition of such a nature, as did not at all militate against either the church or state of this kingdom, and as such it should have his support.

Right honourable GEORGE OGLE. The notice which the honourable baronet has given at this early period of the session, is perfectly fair and candid; and I am sure that he will also give due notice of the day on which he proposes to introduce this business, that such gentlemen as may not think his measures favourable to the protestant interest may be prepared: for my part, Sir, I ever have maintained, and with my last breath I will maintain the protestant ascendancy;—nor can I think it within the power of human wisdom to do any thing effectual for the Roman Catholics, without endangering that ascendancy in church and state.

Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY gave notice, that on Tuesday fortnight he should bring forward a motion relative to this country being restricted from trading beyond the Cape of Good Hope.

Several accounts were presented, and ordered to lie on the table; and the house having appointed the usual standing committee, adjourned.

FRIDAY, JANUARY, 20, 1792.

Mr. SPEAKER having taken the chair.

The chairman of the select committee on the merits of the late county Tipperary election, reported their determination, "That Francis Matthew, Esquire, was not duly elected, and ought not

to have been returned; but that Richard Bagwell, esquire, the petitioning member, was duly elected, and ought to have been returned."

The clerk of the hanaper, in consequence attended at the bar, pursuant to the order of the Speaker, to make the necessary alteration in his return, and Mr. Bagwell was introduced and took the customary oaths and his seat.

LORD THURLES brought up the report from the committee to whom was referred the address of yesterday to his majesty—read paragraph by paragraph, and agreed to.

The honourable Mr. LOFTUS reported from the committee appointed to prepare an address of the house, as voted yesterday, to his excellency the lord lieutenant. The address was received, read and agreed to.

Ordered, that a committee of such members as are of his majesty's most honourable privy council do wait forthwith on his excellency to know when he will be pleased to receive the said address.

The right honourable Mr. HOBART, after some time, intimated to the house his excellency's pleasure that he would be ready to receive the same on to-morrow at four o'clock. Ordered that Mr. Speaker, attended by the house, do wait on his excellency accordingly, and present the same.

SIR HENRY CAVENDISH moved several regulations touching points of order for the better regulation of proceedings in cases of contested election. Agreed to unanimously.

Mr. SPEAKER stated the necessity of appointing some regular hour for the commencement of business every day during the session, and proposed his own readiness to attend and take the chair at any time agreeable to the house.

SIR HENRY CAVENDISH perfectly coincided in the idea, as necessary in point of regularity and dispatch, and highly applauded the readiness of Mr. Speaker, manifested on all occasions for the accommodation of the house.

Adjourned.

SATURDAY, JANUARY, 21, 1792.

At half after four o'clock, the Speaker, attended by several members, went up to the castle with the addresses, and being returned, the Speaker reported that the house had attended the

lord lieutenant with the address of this house to his majesty, and thereupon his excellency was pleased to return the following answer:

“ I will forthwith transmit this dutiful and loyal address to be laid before his majesty.”

The Speaker also reported, that he had presented the address of thanks to the lord lieutenant, for his speech to both houses of parliament, and that his excellency was pleased to return the following answer;

“ I return you my sincere thanks for this obliging address, I have nothing more at heart than the true interests of Ireland, and your approbation will encourage my endeavours to promote their welfare.”

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER moved, that this house do, on Monday next, take into consideration his excellency the lord lieutenant's speech to both houses of parliament. Agreed to.

He also moved, that an humble address be presented to his excellency the lord lieutenant, that he will be pleased to give directions to the proper officers to lay before this house the public accounts of the nation, the several establishments civil and military, and other charges of government, together with the state of the revenue, and the charges of management and other deductions from the 25th of March, 1791, to the 29th of September following. Ordered accordingly.

Ordered, that the said addresses be presented by such members of this house as are of his majesty's most honourable privy council.—House adjourned to Monday.

MONDAY, JANUARY 23, 1792.

Honourable Captain Pakenham, as proper officer, presented some accounts from the war-office.

Order of the day, for taking into consideration his excellency the lord lieutenant's speech from the throne being gone into, the speech was read at the table, after which,

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER moved, “ that a supply be granted to his majesty, and that the house do to-mor,

row resolve itself into a committee of the whole house to take said motion into consideration. Agreed to.

Some accounts were presented at the bar by the proper officer.

Mr. ISAAC CORRY moved, that the proper officer do lay before the house an account of the particulars under the heads of concordatum, military contingencies, and barracks for the year ending 25th of March 1791.—Ordered.

Honourable Captain Pakenham presented an account of the ordnance establishment.

The right honourable Mr. HOBART reported, that his excellency having been pleased to order the accounts civil and military to be laid before them in pursuance of their request.

Mr. POMEROY, chairman of the committee appointed to try the merits of the petition of Anthony Daly, Esq. complaining of an undue election of the county Galway, reported from the committee, that they had come to the following resolutions:

“ That Joseph-Henry Blake, Esq. was not duly elected to serve as knight of the shire in this present parliament for the county of Galway.

“ That Joseph-Henry Blake, Esq. ought not to have been returned;—and that Anthony Daly, Esq. the petitioner, was not duly elected to serve in parliament as knight of the shire for that county.”

Ordered to be entered on the journals, and that the Speaker do issue his writ, to elect a knight of the shire for the county Galway.

Sir HERCULES LANGRISHE said, that having mentioned an intention of bringing forward some propositions for the relief of the Roman Catholics of this kingdom; and conceiving it his duty as soon as possible to acquaint the house with the full extent and nature of these propositions, in order that they might receive the most mature deliberation, he would on Wednesday next state to the house his general notions on that subject, and at the same time mention those points to which, in his opinion, the attention of the house ought principally to be directed; after which he would move for leave to bring in a bill relative to that subject, giving the house however all due time to consider a business of such momentous importance.

Ajourned till to-morrow.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 24, 1792.

The house resolved itself into a committee of the whole house, to take into consideration the supply to be granted to his majesty.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER made several motions for the usual grants in different branches of the revenue;—after which the house adjourned to the next day.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 25, 1792.

Mr. MASON brought up the report from the committee of supply who sat yesterday.—Ordered to lie on the table.

Ordered, that the said committee, and the committee of accounts do sit again on Thursday se'nnight.

Sir Laurence Parsons, baronet, knight of the shire for the king's county, and Mr. Bury, member for Kilmallock, took the oaths and their seats respectively.

Sir HERCULES LANGRISHE rose to state his promised plan, and said :—

Mr. Speaker—It is now just ten years since the cause of the Roman Catholics particularly engaged the attention of parliament—since we took our last review of those laws which the passions and prejudices, perhaps the pressure, of an intemperate season, had entailed upon them.

I think, Sir, the present times and circumstances invite us to resume that duty.

The good offices we owe, one to another—the indulgence which is due to fellow-subjects, recommended and endeared by the unimpeachable conduct of a century, the consideration that we owe to the national prosperity, all unite in calling our attention to the revision of this subject, at a time when the public mind is becoming more enlightened, and prejudices and jealousy are every day yielding to confidence and affection.

It is not without much satisfaction, and I may be allowed to say, with some little pride too, that I take a part in this grateful duty; as I consider, amongst the few honours of my humble life, that of being almost the first member of the Irish parliament who ventured to state to you the imprudence and immorality of what were then the popery laws; as a system of jurisprudence, subversive of integrity, and as a scheme of government, which, whilst by its se-

verity it alienated the body of the people, by its impolicy forbade them to vest in the state any hostage for their fidelity.

I own, Sir, I was not able in my researches into Holy Writ, to meet with that particular passage of the Scripture, that gives an authority to propagate the faith by a perversion of morals—or from a principle of piety, to prohibit the exercise of religious worship.

I could not presume to think that it was ever justifiable, for the sake of civil or ceremonial conformity, to build a code of religious laws on the ruins of almost every moral virtue and obligation; to sport with the most sacred feelings, and violate the fondest prepossessions of the human heart—to rob youth of education and age of authority—to seduce the son to become an interested informer against the piety of the father, and so break the bonds of all domestic fidelity and affection.

I know very well, that the state has a right to impose conditions on those who are to become the state itself.—But to be entitled to common benefits, and equal protection, I know of no qualifications but allegiance, a peaceable demeanor, and obedience to the laws.

It is now many years since I first stated those ideas to parliament; but, from the temper of the times, perhaps the imbecility of the advocate, I was unsupported, and unsuccessful.

However, the agitation of truth must ever make an impression. Succeeding times became more enlightened, and religious animosity gave way to moral justice and political wisdom.

In the year 1774, the legislature first gratified the Roman Catholics with an opportunity of testifying their allegiance, by framing an oath for them, competent to that test, without involving any article of religious faith, or speculative opinion.

Four years afterwards (in 1778) the legislature, wisely considering in their oaths, rewarded their loyalty by some substantial concessions.

The act in their favour then passed, truly recites in the preamble, “That from their uniform peaceable behaviour for a long series of years, it appears reasonable and expedient to relax several of their incapacities and disabilities.”

Accordingly it allowed them “to take leases of land for nine hundred and ninety-nine years, and at any rent; to enjoy all such estates that shall be left or transferred to them, and to dispose of the same by will or otherwise; and that they shall be deviseable and transferrable, as in the case of other people.” The abominable usurpation of children against the father was abolished—and to these concessions, the conditions annexed were: Taking the oath of 1774—and that the law should not extend to converts relapsing, or to Protestants becoming Papists, or educating their children in the Popish religion. The legislature naturally considering that some suspicion attached on frequent ver-

fatility of faith, and on those who professed a religion themselves which they would not transmit to their posterity.

Four years after that (in 1782) the spirit of toleration further extended itself, and sound policy gained a further ascendancy in favour of the Roman Catholics. That system of severity, which a few years before was thought prudence, began to look something like injustice, and what prejudice had adopted as preservation, moderation began to view as little short of oppression.

In 1782, the capacity of acquiring land by purchase (which in 1778 was granted under a fiction) was given direct and entire.

“The acquisition by purchase, grant, limitation, descent, or devise, by will or otherwise descendable, as the lands of Protestants,” was communicated to the Roman Catholics.—Some of their disabilities, as to education, were removed.—The severe law was repealed, that compelled the Papists, to declare on oath when, and where, and by whom they heard mass celebrated.—The unequal attachment of their properties to, make reprisals for common robberies, was discontinued.—Their houses were no more to be exposed as public plunder; and the preposterous, but offensive prohibition, whereby persons professing the Popish religion were forbidden to reside in certain cities, was repealed.—They were allowed the full rights of property.—The free exercise of religion; and to appoint guardians to their own children.

Here, it must be confessed, was a great effort of liberality, in opposition to old opinions. The occasion was worthy of the exertion; and the consequences justified and rewarded it. Exclusive of all moral duty, it was of so great moment to the national prosperity to involve in its interests—to attach—to naturalize in their native country so great a body of its inhabitants—to make them a part of the nation, without whom we could not be a nation at all.

However, Sir considering the nature of man—the obstinacy of old opinions—and the usual acrimony of religious dissention, I must say, that so signal a triumph over rooted prejudices, disclosed such a growing confidence—such an amicable sympathy—such a relenting of heart, in the predominant powers of the State towards the Roman Catholics of the country, as ought to conciliate their affection, engage their gratitude and confirm their attachment to the State.

And when I say (speaking from a sense of moral obligation) that such conduct of the legislature ought to have produced this effect. I say, with confidence and assurance, from the authority of experience, that it has produced those effects. It has stamped those sentiments with a deep impression on the minds of our Catholic brethren—I mean on the minds of those who are suffi-

ciently enlightened to judge of the relations of political society, or feel the force of moral obligation.

If I were not of that opinion, confirmed and decided as it is into conviction, I would not at this moment stand up as their advocate for another concession. For I must take the liberty to say, what it is my duty to say as a member of Parliament, what it is my duty to observe as a common citizen, what is the duty of every person to know and to conform to, "that the state is paramount, and all men who live under its protection, live under its controul, and are amenable to its superiority." If they approach the legislature, they must approach it by the avenues the Constitution has marked out; if they apply to Parliament, it must be by petition, not representation or remonstrance; if they would have benefits, they must solicit them as favours, and accept them as concessions. This is not only the constitution of Ireland, but the constitution of every settled government in the known world.

As to the natural Rights of Man (of which we have lately heard so much) they do not belong to political society; they belong to that state of nature which is so accurately described by Mr. Hobbs, and so ardently recommended by Mr. Paine; a state where, indeed, the race is to the swift, and the battle to the strong; where possession is property, and strength is right; a state superior to the conditions of society, the restrictions of covenant, or the bondage of law.

In a society protected by laws, and blessed with a constitution, those laws and that constitution ascertain the Rights of Man.

Therefore, Sir, I must freely confess, that notwithstanding my prepossessions in favour of the Roman Catholics, (which I shall always be proud to acknowledge, as they are justified by their conduct) though I can number some of them among my ancestors; though I love many of them as my friends, and embrace all of them as my countrymen, I was yet for some time checked in my ardour, and interrupted in the progress of my services to them, by reading of late a multitude of publications and paragraphs in the newspapers, and other prints circulated gratis, and communicated to every body, with every degree of industry, purporting to convey the sentiments of the Catholic Body of Ireland.

If these were their sentiments, they were such as could not recommend them to the further favour of the State;—they were such as must alienate their old friends, and could not get them new ones, if they would chuse their friends from amongst those who are friends to the constitution. What was the import?—They were exhortations to the people never to be satisfied at any concession, until the State itself was conceded; not only that, but until a new constitution should be made for their present accommodation, and future entertainment;—they were precautions against public tranquillity—they were invitations to disorder,

and covenants to discontent ; they were ostentations of strength, rather than solicitations for favours ; rather appeals to the powers of the people, than applications to the authority of the State ; they involved the relief of the Catholic, with the revolution of the Government, and were dissertations for democracy rather than arguments for toleration ;—they seemed the projects of some bold theorists, whose principle was to divide man from man, and whose politics, was to separate Great Britain from Ireland ;—they seemed to be the effusions of some rash philosopher, ignorant of our system, who would set loose and adrift the little planet we inhabit, and commit it to the vortex of a vain and exploded philosophy ; to range the universe without attraction, connexion or relation to any greater, or other body.—Was there a man who felt the blessings of regulated rights, and settled government ; who knew the value of peace and the comforts of property ?—was there a man who preferred order to outrage, and happiness to speculation,—or who looked at the growing prosperity of the country, whose mind must not have revolted at the tendency of such doctrines ; or who must not have felt an accumulated concern and disappointment, if he could for a moment suppose that they had originated with our Catholic brethren ?—that they were the growth of that soil which we had so lately and so liberally cultivated ?

But common sense and common justice required of us to trace those opinions to their source.

If the Roman Catholics embraced those sentiments, the State could not embrace them—if they were misled by rash councils to engage in confederacies of perpetual requisition,—If they were not to be satisfied at any concession, whilst any thing remained to be conceded. In that case common sense must suggest to us, that we should not by any new concession unite more power with their discontent ; for however sincerely we may and ought to wish that they should enjoy every comfort and happiness the state can afford them, yet we cannot go so far, as to alter or make a new constitution for their accommodation ;—we cannot even for them, hazard the blessings of an established free Government, that has been the growth and the wisdom of ages, and finally ratified and settled for above an hundred years ; we are not so daring as to commit to the chance of every rash experiment.

If the Roman Catholics could have been so far perverted, as to have addressed the legislature in these high tones of requisition, they would have assailed that constitution they affected to reverence—they would have made their advances to Parliament as besiegers, not petitioners ; and Parliament would have been bound, in its own defence, to repulse them, to resist their applications. If you were, in that case, to concede or capitulate, you would surrender the constitution in your charge, you would violate your trust, you would betray the state, and be responsible for the anat-

chy that would rush in upon you.—But I have the happiness now to assert from authority, what I have long learned from experience, “That not a sentiment of this tendency is entertained by the Catholic body; none such belong to them; they renounce them; they utterly disclaim them.”—There is not a class of his majesty’s subjects more attached than they are to the monarchy and hereditary succession, more obedient to the laws, or more devoted to the king and constitution, as by law established.

These principles they testify by their conduct at all times; at times very different from the present, when the laws were less indulgent, when they had fewer pledges to bind them to their country; when property and the titles of land did not appear (as they now do) irrevocably fixed; at times when hostile fleets and armies were on your coasts and when even the king on the throne, by some may not have been supposed to stand (as he does now) without a rival in their affections.

They now come forward by solemn declaration to re-assert those principles at the foot of the throne; to vindicate them from all possible misconception or misrepresentation; they approach you by the ways of the constitution, and with the word of the constitution, without asserting a claim of their own, or presuming to dictate to the authority of Parliament: “They desire a further repeal of the laws affecting them; they express gratitude for past favours, confiding in your liberality and benevolence, that your future ones will be as extensive as to your consideration of the general welfare shall seem expedient; disclaiming every thing that can directly or indirectly tend to interrupt the public tranquillity and subjection to the laws; they give you their past as a pledge of their future good conduct;” and, give me leave to say, the constitutional language they express, is a further pledge of the constitutional principles they feel.

With such a testimony, I address you in favour of the Roman Catholics of Ireland; with a declaration of this import in my hand, subscribed by an host, as to national authority; persons of high distinction, ancient family, great character, enlightened education, ample fortune, and extensive influence in the country; men of general intercourse and knowledge, political, professional, and mercantile; men too, who themselves and their ancestors, have made ample sacrifices to a sanctimonious observance of their vows. Without affecting or entertaining any disrespect for any other orders or classes of the people, I must say, it is from persons of the description which I have given, that national opinion and professional principle are best to be collected; not from a few deluded people in the South; not from a few dissatisfied people in the North; nor yet from any strange and incongruous connexion that may be fabricated between both; nay, if by some wonderful rotation these two extremities should ever happen to meet; if by some monstrous convulsion the two poles (if I may say so) far

as they are asunder, should be brought into conjunction, they would not have force to disturb the happy and temperate regions placed between, where the people enjoy equal days and indulgent heavens.

With such a declaration of principles, by such subscribing parties, confirmed by the conduct of an hundred years, and attested by the experience and observation of every dispassionate Protestant in the nation; I say, fortified by such superior authority, I feel a total indifference to all the several paragraphs and publications to which I have alluded, from the massy-pamphlet to the volatile hand-bill; from the original inrollment of discord that takes post and garrison in the citadel, to the detachments of newspapers that are sent out to scour the country. For the honour of the nation, I should wish they were not to travel to other countries; for the peace of the nation, I am not afraid they should travel through this. I know the loyalty of the Roman Catholics of Ireland; I know they will not taste of the cup of sedition, whether it be brought vapid and muddy from the troubled waters of Bethesda's pool; or come heated and mantling from the intemperance of the ale-house.

It is under such a conviction that I address you with confidence for a further repeal of the laws affecting the Roman Catholics, to that extent which your wisdom and liberality shall lead you to think expedient. What that extent shall be, appears to me the only question that can divide the opinion of Parliament on this subject; and I confess, that is a question which may naturally produce diversity of opinion amongst wise and good men.

As for myself, balanced as I am between confidence in the Catholics and devotion to ancient establishment, I have not found it easy to accommodate between the two contending propensities.

If I were engaged in the unfortunate labours of forming a new constitution, it never would occur to my mind to introduce the words Protestant and Papist as terms of political discrimination. But as we have a constitution already established, which we feel competent to preserve liberty and to promote happiness; and as we have learned from the experience of others the calamities that may occur in composing a new one, it must be our constant labour, as it is our dearest interest, to watch with a pious vigilance, the excellent one we have, and protect it from the hand of innovation and experiment.—We must, in every political transaction, keep that constitution before our eyes, and act with perpetual reference to its principles.

Under that constitution the predominancy is Protestant.—It was so declared at the revolution—it was so provided in the acts settling the succession of the crown—the king's coronation oath was enjoined in order to keep it so—the king, as first magistrate of the state, was obliged to take the oath of abjuration, and subscribe the declaration; and every other member of the state, le-

gislative and executive, stands bound under the same obligation,—Whether it was or was not wise at the time to have made so broad a barrier, I shall not, at this period, venture to inquire. I own to you, Sir, I tremble at the notion of reviewing, for the purpose of altering, any of the constituent principles of that revolution, which in its consequences has proved so happy to these countries. I would not rashly hazard the stability of so noble a fabric, to remove even an acknowledged defect; and especially when the trade of constitution-making had grown into a sort of professional practice;—when we see academies opened throughout the country to give diplomas and degrees in that science;—and when, even without the advantage of this academical education, common artificers profess to reform the work of Somers and of Locke.

Though I should always hesitate to touch any principle of that revolution: though we should look up to it as to a polar star, by which we are to steer in whatsoever direction we may shape our course, yet I am not so dogmatical as to say that there is any human institution so immutable and entire, as never, in any degree, to accommodate to any possible change of the times and circumstances; and it has always been my decided opinion, that the severities with which party prejudice and religious animosity inspired the penal statutes that succeeded the revolution, are fit objects of frequent revision, for the purpose of repeal or mitigation, in the proportion and to that extent which the temper and condition of the times may render practicable or prudent.—However in such remedial proceedings, it is essential to the good of every state to avoid violent transitions or changes—to guard against sudden or extravagant transfers of power or property.

In endeavouring to ascertain the particular points of relaxation which it would be prudent for me to submit to the wisdom of Parliament, I made it my business to solicit a communication with as many members of the legislature as I could, without presumption, consult on the subject.—You, Sir, who know every thing, know that every such consultation which has success for its object, must be conducted and concluded by mutual deference, and concession of opinion. I should not be sincere in my services to the Roman Catholics, if I were to hazard every thing by aspiring at more than appeared to me to be conformable to the sense of those who are to decide, and to whose judgment I am bound to submit. I therefore, under that impression, confine myself to the following points:

1st. “I would give them the practice and profession of the law,” as a reasonable provision, and application of their talents to their own country.—2dly. I would restore to them education, entire and unrestrained—because I think a state of ignorance is a state of barbarity. This I think would be accomplished by taking off the necessity for a licence as enjoined by the act of 1782.—3dly, I would draw closer the bonds of intercourse and affection,

by allowing intermarriage, and repealing that cruel statute that serves to betray female credulity, and bastardize the children of a virtuous mother.—4thly. I would remove those obstructions to arts and manufactures, that limit the number of apprentices, which are so necessary to assist and promote trade.

I have now, Sir, only to ask your pardon for having taken up so much of your time; but the subject has engaged my mind with so much ardour and affection, that I could not avoid speaking thus largely upon it. It is a subject that I embraced in my youth, and shall not cast off in my age, unless it shall be disposed to desert me. I wish the Protestants and Catholics should, by the benignant progress of time, grow to be one people; and they certainly would, if some rash intemperance does not interpose to retard the progress, and revive the prejudices which have so long kept us asunder. If the Roman Catholics look to their old friends, they will see them prove their sincerity, by labouring in practicable services, rather than deluding their hopes by the magnitude of demand. I am confident they will listen to their old friends, and that the patient magnanimity which distinguished and dignified them in times of rigour, will not desert them in times of relaxation. They may be assured that a perseverance in that conduct can alone give their old friends a capacity to serve them. And they may likewise be assured, (whatever misrepresentations have gone abroad) that it is owing to the seasonable interpositions of those high authorities of Catholic loyalty to which I have alluded, confronting the publications that traduced their principles, that the favourable sentiments in his majesty's government are confirmed. It is owing to that testimony, that I, the humblest, but the oldest of their friends, have the confidence or capacity to plead their cause of this day; and it is a testimony, I trust, will be a powerful advocate for them with the Irish Parliament. At present I shall only move you—

“That leave be given to bring in a bill for removing certain restraints and disabilities under which his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects labour, from statutes at present in force.”

The Right Hon. Mr. HOBART rose, and seconded the motion, without making any observation.

The Right Hon. Mr. CUFFE, I do not rise to debate the question. But I think that gentlemen would do well to state their opinion of the conduct of the Roman Catholics. Those headed by a nobleman who is distinguished for his liberality, and extended property, who have signed the declaration alluded to by the right honourable baronet, deserve every kindness in the power of the legislature to bestow. They are good citizens—loyal subjects. They have told you that they will be

grateful for any indulgence—and that they will not pretend to point out the extent of the relief which in your wisdom you may think proper to bestow. Surely in those circumstances we cannot refuse them some indulgence. But there are Roman Catholics who have conducted themselves in a very different manner. They have established a court of delegates in the capital; and they have appointed local committees in the several counties. To the honour of the county which I represent, (Mayo) it is not one of those which is disgraced by such a committee of correspondence. They have entered into associations with the discontented and the turbulent of all religions. And relying upon their power, they presume to dictate to the legislature, what they will have. This system seems to have been adopted in order to terrify the Parliament. They have also appointed an agent to carry on the business, and this agent, according to their instructions, is not to leave this country until the object shall be accomplished.

My duty as a member of this house, obliges me to declare to this assembly, and to the world, that neither the Government nor the gentlemen of the House of Commons will be intimidated by their numbers, their power, or their ENGLISH AGENT. For my part, I am not in the cabinet, but if I was, I would advise the minister, and I now do advise him to tell all men of all religions, “WE HAVE POWER ENOUGH TO PROTECT OUR ESTABLISHMENTS IN CHURCH AND STATE. WE WILL PROTECT THEM ON THE PRINCIPLES OF THE REVOLUTION, AND WE WILL PUNISH THOSE WHO SEEK TO DISTURB THE PEACE AND TRANQUILLITY OF THIS GROWING COUNTRY.”

Colonel BLAQUIERE. I am satisfied that indulgence should be extended to the Roman Catholics as they have always been attached to the crown and to government. The publications which have been spoken of, in my opinion, can produce no ill effects in persons of sense or education. Certainly they can have no weight in this House, as they proceed from persons who are no judges of weight or measure. I must therefore express my approbation of the whole. I shall not discuss the subject; that having been so ably done by the right honourable baronet, that I must fall infinitely short of him.

The Right Hon. Mr. OGLE. Sir, I do not rise to debate the merits of the question which has been proposed to the House. A better opportunity for that will occur, at a future stage of the business. I have only to request that my right honourable friend will not hurry the subject, but give a good deal of time for consideration. This is no trifling affair. The alteration of any part of the constitution must be confessed to be a question of

consequence. Therefore it is, that I hope we shall be indulged with a long day.

We know, Sir, what the wishes of the Roman Catholics are ; but we do not know what are the sentiments of the Protestants. We do not know whether our constituents are satisfied with the idea of a further relaxation of the penal laws.

I assure the hon. baronet, that any contest which may take place between us, shall be the contest of friendship and opinion, and nothing else. I know his talents and candour, which I must always respect, however we may differ in sentiment.

THE HON. DENIS BROWNE. I agree that this is not a stage for discussing the principles of the bill. When the proper period arrives, we should discuss the subject upon the broad basis of toleration. These cruel restrictions which stained the pages of our statute-book, so shocking were they to the idea of a civilized people, that they reflected more disgrace upon their authors, than they produced injury to the unfortunate people. Time has been requested to consider of the propositions which have been mentioned ; I must declare, that considering the liberality of the age, and their eminent services, **THEY DO NOT COME UP TO WHAT THE ROMAN CATHOLICS HAD A RIGHT TO EXPECT.**

I have heard a great deal mentioned about an intention to disturb the peace of the country. I wish to know what this intention is?—what proof there is of its existence? and who are the Roman Catholics concerned?—for otherwise it would be idle to enter into a debate upon the matter. Positive I am, that it cannot be the Roman Catholics of Ireland for the last thirty years. Their conduct for that space of time has been not only peaceable, but such as should conciliate the affections of their countrymen of every description. When we were surrounded by a warring world, and menaced with dangers, they were ready to sacrifice every thing in the common cause of the empire. And in their loyal protestations, they never mixed a sentence of complaint relative to their degraded situation in their own country, though they avowed that they were ready to lose their lives in its defence.

I am connected with much property in a particular part of this country, principally inhabited by Roman Catholics. It is no more than my duty to answer for my own county (Mayo) in which the proportion is 125,000 Roman Catholics, to 8,000 Protestants, that their conduct has always been loyal, peaceable, and meritorious.

It has been insinuated, though no direct charge has been made, that the real object of the Roman Catholics is to obtain power ; whether by force or by sophistry is indifferent ; the attainment of power is the design. This is not the truth. It is not power that the Roman Catholics seek to obtain, but **LIBERATION ; liberation**

from a degraded and disgraceful vassalage, odious to the nature of man, and the reproach of a free country.

What, save the penal-laws, has kept Ireland backward for such a number of years, notwithstanding all the advantages of climate and situation? Nothing. They separated the people from the legislature, cramped their industry and subdued their genius. See the consequences that followed a relaxation of the penal laws. The nation rapidly advanced in riches, prosperity, commerce, tranquillity, and happiness. Pursue the same line of conduct, and it must produce similar consequences. I shall only add at present, that I hope the day is not far distant, when all descriptions of Irishmen shall cordially unite, and all prejudice be at an end.

Mr. COOTE. It is dangerous to attempt altering any part of the constitution as settled at the Revolution. Caution, therefore, is extremely necessary; particularly as experience has proved the great advantages of the Revolution to this country. I approve of the intention of restoring to the Roman Catholics the education of their children, and think it cannot be done too soon. The admission of Roman Catholics to the bar may also be advantageous. But so long as it remains a principle with the Roman Catholics to procure CONVERTS to their religion; allowing them to intermarry, can only be productive of evil and family strife.

I hope the day will never arrive in which they will be entitled to a vote on elections, or to any share in the legislature. I hope this will always be the opinion of administration. But should a government be otherwise disposed in this country, they will find themselves destitute of support, and abandoned by every Protestant of property and influence.

Right Hon. Mr. HOBART. It was not my intention to debate this question. I should not have risen were it not for the suggestion of my right honourable friend on the second bench (Mr. Cuffe). I therefore declare that if any attack should be made on the establishments in church and state, it is the fixed determination of Government to support them; and any attempt of this nature, either by force or intimidation, will be found to meet the decided opposition of the Government of both countries.

Leave was then given to bring in the bill, and a committee appointed to prepare the same, without a dissenting voice.

Mr. O'HARA rose and said, he agreed with most of the gentlemen who had expressed their sentiments respecting the giving some further relief to the Roman Catholics, and very heartily concurred with the House in the leave given to bring in a bill for

that purpose. But that in order to have the subject fully before the House, it might be wished that the House knew exactly the particulars in which the Roman Catholics desire relief; first because Parliament might otherwise unintentionally omit matter which appear essentially necessary to the Roman Catholics, however unimportant they appear to Parliament, and so fail of giving satisfaction; but more particularly because, if the relief desired by the Roman Catholics were ascertained the House might then draw the line definitively and say, "we will meet your wishes thus far, but never can go farther."

He said, he had thought in the year 1782, that every thing was then done which was necessary to relieve the conscience, or essential to the happiness of the Roman Catholics, and he was sure such was the intention of Parliament; but the House then proceeded without knowing from the Roman Catholics what the particulars were in which they desired relief. By which means the greater opening was left to desire further relief in the present instance. But if we now were in possession of a statement of their wishes made by themselves, we might easily draw the line by the new act of Parliament so strongly, as to preclude any expectation of change, at least for many years to come.

These considerations (he said) had been strong inducements with him to listen to the desire of a very particular friend of his, to lay such a statement before the House. A friend who was not of the Roman Catholic persuasion; but one to whom he would not willingly refuse any thing he could ask, had desired him to present such a statement, as a personal favour. Though he did not know the petitioners, he knew the integrity of his friend, who told him they were altogether worth upwards of a million, which he mentioned to shew that they were considerable individuals, whose sentiments might be supposed to coincide with the greater part at least of the Roman Catholics.

However, though he presented the petition, he requested not to be considered as its particular patron; for he had agreed to present it upon the terms only of reserving to himself the full liberty of discussing every part of it, and condemning or approving as he might think proper. If there be any thing exceptionable in the petition, it was not his; if more were desired by it than were reasonable or consistent with our establishments in church or state, he would decidedly vote against such parts.

Under those circumstances he ventured to offer the petition to the House, and the rather because, to petition Parliament is a matter of right in the subject; so much so, that a member can hardly refuse to present a petition if required by no improper description of men; but more particularly, because the petition brought information before the House which might be useful in framing the bill; that the petitioners after stating the particulars in which they hoped for relief, promised to acquiesce in

whatsoever relief parliament might think proper to give them.

Mr. R. SHERIDAN thought it a very odd way of introducing a petition, to state that it came not from any particular body of men—but from an intimate acquaintance.—In the present instance, it was probably nothing more or less than this, that an intimate acquaintance of the honourable member's prayed the House that all the places of trust and emolument in the state should be open to Roman Catholics.

[Mr. Burke, whom we suppose to be the gentleman alluded to by Mr. O'Hara, having incautiously ventured into the body of the house behind the Speaker's chair, to speak with Mr. O'Hara, there arose a general cry of "Into custody!"—he however withdrew time enough to avoid it.]

The SOLICITOR GENERAL rising, said, the petition in its present state of abandonment can be no object of notice: such a petition, so managed, I never have heard of before; nor indeed have I ever read of any thing like it, except once in the cross-readings which some time since were seen in the London prints, where opposite paragraphs were strangely made to correspond. In ridicule of the foolish petitioners that flocked to St. James's with the nonsense of that day, I remember a paragraph in these words: "On such a day a most violent petition was presented to the House of Commons—It luckily missed fire, and the villains made off." [Here a very general and loud laugh.] I am glad to see the House in such good humour; and that we may meet again in the same temper, I move the question of adjournment.

Honourable D. BROWNE was for receiving the petition,

Mr. O'HARA withdrew the petition for the present, because he could not say he had seen the petitioners sign it; but that he should present it another day; and that he thought the House ought to be glad to know what relief was prayed, in order that it might give satisfaction so far as was consistent with our civil and religious establishments.

Right Hon. Mr. GRATTAN said, that he should be very sorry that any man should depart possessed with an idea that this House had refused to receive the Catholic petition, or committed an act so outrageous and unconstitutional; but an informality attending the manner of presenting it has induced the member himself to postpone the business for another day. Sir, I concur with the mover of the bill in every thing he has said in favour of the Catholic body; it is, therefore, that I cannot agree with, other gentlemen who talk of their evil intentions

and seditious publications.—Sir, I know of none such that can be charged to the Roman Catholics, nor do I see how gentlemen can assent to a bill which supposes the merits of Catholics, and insinuations that bespeak the contrary :—What you give to the Roman Catholics—give it liberally :—what you refuse—refuse decently :—whatever you do—do with discretion :—whatever you say—let it be the language of decency and good manners.

Mr. G. PONSONBY held it to be the undoubted right of the constituent to petition parliament in a legal and respectful manner—but only in this manner ; on this subject he was remarkably attentive to rule and form, and objected on that account to the reception of the petition, as it contravened every one of the established forms.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 26, 1792.

As soon as the Speaker had taken the chair, he rose and addressed the House on the subject of the disturbance which had taken place yesterday evening. He said, he was sorry to assure the House, that in those disturbances no persons whatever were concerned except the students of the university, or persons wearing college gowns—he would not mention the particulars of the outrages they committed, because he did not wish to draw down the indignation of the House—but upon due consideration of the offence, after consulting many members of the house, he thought it proper to declare, as the least severe mark of the House's displeasure, that the supposed privilege of persons coming in gowns should henceforth be taken away, and that like all other persons, they should not enter the gallery, without being passed by a member of the house.

Doctor BROWNE was extremely sorry for what had happened ; he never had, nor never would court popularity by countenancing disorder ; he was very sorry that any of the students in the university which he had the honour to represent, should have been guilty of any act which called for a reprehension from the chair, but he hoped that their future good behaviour would induce the chair to restore them that indulgence which they had so long enjoyed.

To this the House agreed.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 27, 1792.

The Right Hon. Mr. GRATTAN presented a petition, stating damage to an immense amount, sustained by persons whose lands, houses, and ware-houses have been inundated, in consequence of a breach which has been made by the tide through Sir John Rogerfon's wall; and praying relief.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER observed, that these lands and houses being private property, from which the landlords derived a very great revenue, it was their duty to preserve them from the overflowings of the tide; they had, however, through wilful negligence, suffered the work to fall into decay—and it would be a great hardship indeed, if the public purse was obliged to make good private losses incurred by negligence.

Right Hon. Mr. GRATTAN admitted that it would be a great hardship on the public to submit to such demands; but it would be still a greater hardship on the public if the port of Dublin was suffered to run to ruin by the water being diverted from the bed of the Liffey; besides, many individuals, who were by no means guilty of suffering the wall to fall down, and were well deserving the protection of the House, were involved in the common ruin. The petition was ordered to lie on the table.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 28, 1792.

Mr. GRATTAN reported from the committee appointed to take into consideration the petition of the persons injured by the breach in the South Wall, that they had proved the allegation of their petition.

He then moved, that an address be presented to his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, requesting the breach might be forthwith repaired.

Also, that a committee be appointed, and proper engineers employed to inquire into the state of the North and South Walls.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER declared, that the reason why he did not oppose the resolution for granting money out of the public coffer to benefit individuals, was, because it was coupled with the second resolution which proposed to reimburse the public. It was his duty, and a very painful duty it was, to watch over the public money; and great concern it gave him to be so often obliged to rise in that house, to resist the application

of that money to the improvement of gentlemen's private fortunes, which certainly would be very convenient to them, though utterly destructive to the nation. But in the present case, though the proprietors of the low ground were to be immediately benefited, the resolution ultimately proposed to make them repay the public money; and as the mischief was of that nature that it must every day grow worse, to the ruin of many innocent people who were in no wise blameable for the neglect of those who had suffered the wall to fall to decay, he was the more inclined to extend immediate relief; but upon the positive assurance that the public should be reimbursed by a tax on the lands of those persons whose duty it was to keep the wall in repair; for it would be a dangerous precedent indeed, if men, through negligence or worse, could be enabled to call upon the public to make good losses produced by themselves.

MR. SECRETARY HAMILTON observed, that it was not for want of full and sufficient notice to the proprietors of the grounds that the accident had happened: about six years ago, a large piece of the wall fell down, and the sea threatened to overflow, as in the present case; information was brought to Government who thought it their duty instantly to take measures for the public safety; accordingly a temporary repair was made, and at the same time the proprietors of the grounds were called upon to prevent future mischief—they were called upon in vain—nay even the grand jury of the city of Dublin presented them as committing a nuisance against the public, but to no effect. He was, however, for an immediate repair to prevent further mischief to the public; but under a fixed determination to have the money repaid.

RIGHT HON. MR. BERESFORD entered into a short recital of the terms on which Sir John Rogerfon, the original projector of this wall, had undertaken to reclaim those grounds from the sea; after various bargains with the corporation of the city, in whom the right of the overflowed lands was, he took from them a fee-farm lease of the lands he should recover, at a very small rent, for a certain time, but to rise considerably at the end of an hundred years. The present proprietors, Lord Mountjoy and Mr. Benson, derive their titles under Sir John Rogerfon, the one by purchase, the other by descent;—and the reason these gentlemen have done nothing in it, is, that the matter is in litigation between them and the city. They say the city is obliged, the city say they are obliged, to keep up the wall; they alledge that there is a clause in the lease from the city to Sir John Rogerfon, that if the city shall at any time think it necessary for enlarging the port, they may reassume and open into the river eighty feet of

of the ground so recovered; and they say that within a few years the city actually has claimed that ground which happens to be precisely the breadth of the wall: the city on the contrary alleges, that Sir John Rogerfon and his heirs are bound to maintain the works originally erected by him; that till very lately they have kept them in repair, and never thought of calling on the city, whose interests are comparatively nothing in the overflown lands, and who by a fee-farm lease have set them away from themselves for ever. Certain it was that Lord Mountjoy and Mr. Benson, in making a lease to Mr. Le Favre and Mr. Kent, had bound those gentlemen to take upon themselves any obligation which might lie upon the heirs of Sir John Rogerfon, to keep the wall in repair; and certain it was also, that Lord Mountjoy had filed a bill against them to compel them to performance of covenant, which bill is now in litigation.

He then made a short digression to shew the manner in which the grounds on the north-side of the river had been taken in, the proprietors of which, by a tax among themselves, endeavoured to keep their wall in repair; but in spite of their efforts it was going to ruin. He said, however, the preservation of the port of Dublin was a matter of too much concern to be neglected by that House, even though individuals would neglect their own property; therefore it had been in contemplation to build from Ringsend, on both sides of the river, quite up to the New Custom-house, permanent and substantial walls at an estimated expence of 44,000*l.* but which he doubted not would amount to 70,000*l.* To do this, it would be right that three distinct bodies of men should contribute in proportion to the interest they had in the object: First, the proprietors of the lands on each side, should by a tax on their lands, contribute a sum sufficient to make such a new wall as would be sufficient to protect their lands from the sea.—The merchants who are interested in the shipping trading to the port, are willing, by an additional tax on shipping, to contribute their part; and it is but reasonable that the corporation of the city, who receive a considerable income for anchorage, should contribute also a proportion. By all those means a sum of near 2000*l.* per annum may be raised, which will pay interest for a sum sufficient to complete the work. At present, however, it was necessary that immediate and effectual means should be taken for the safety of the public, and he hoped a sum would be advanced for that purpose, but to be repaid again by the means he had mentioned.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL said, he had no objection whatsoever to granting the money, provided it was perfectly understood that an act of Parliament should pass to indemnify the public. It appeared to him very plainly, that the proprietors of the ground had always considered themselves as bound to maintain

the wall, by their having always, till within a few years, kept it in repair; however, the port must not be ruined through their negligence; it was the duty of parliament to attend to it. He therefore moved, that the committee on this subject should sit again on Monday, and that all persons concerned should be summoned to attend.

Right Hon. Mr. HOBART said, the House having fully concurred in the measure to be adopted, there could remain no doubt but proper means would immediately be taken by Government to repair the mischief that had happened, and to prevent the like happening again.—The House then adjourned till Monday.

MONDAY, JANUARY 30, 1792.

The committee appointed on Saturday to prepare an address to the Lord Lieutenant, on the subject of the South and North Walls, reported that they had agreed to an address, which the chairman then presented to the House.

Mr. CORRY said, he was not at all acquainted with the merits of the subject; but Mr. Benson, one of the proprietors of the inundated grounds, had spoken to him to oppose any interference of the House in this business, as he would himself repair the breach; Lord Mountjoy, the other proprietor, being in England. Mr. Corry said this request had surprized him not a little, till Mr. Benson assigned his reason for making it; which was, that the persons to whom Lord Mountjoy and he, (Mr. Benson) had set the ground, had covenanted to repair the wall, which covenant they had failed to perform; and as his lordship and he were now suing those persons for this breach of covenant, he feared that parliament interfering might take away his lawful remedy, and therefore he begged he might be permitted to repair the wall at his private expence.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said, nothing could give him more pleasure than to see the gentleman repair the wall without calling on the public purse; but surely the public had waited sufficiently long, and in vain, for that event: nor was it just that numbers of merchants and others who were already injured, should be kept to wait for each day's increasing mischief, till it should suit the leisure or convenience of the proprietor to stop the breaches.—Government would have it done on the best terms, and he had no manner of objection in the bill to be

introduced, to allow Mr. Benson to pay the expence; on the contrary, he would be extremely glad of it, and as to the lawsuit, the bill would not affect it in the least.

Mr. CORRY said, that having spoken at all on the subject, he thought it necessary to add one word more, which was, that if special care was not taken to drain those grounds even to dryness, before summer, the damps arising from them in hot weather might cause sickness, that would perhaps prove destructive to multitudes of the inhabitants of this city.

He was answered, they would most certainly be drained. The House then agreed to the address.

Mr PERY presented a petition from the company of undertakers of the Grand Canal, setting forth,

That Parliament having granted the company a certain sum of money, conditioned, that before the expiration of the year 1793, they should construct floating docks on the south side of the River Liffey; they had proceeded with vigour and made considerable progress in that undertaking, till unfortunately by the breach in the South Wall, great part of their works had been destroyed, which must necessarily protract their completion: the company therefore prayed the House to extend their time for finishing to the end of the year 1794.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said, he himself had seen the destruction made in their works; he thought their petition perfectly reasonable; and moved the House to agree therewith; the House unanimously concurred.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said, in compliance with the wishes of the city, the house had last year resolved to alter the mode of insurance respecting lottery tickets: an hon. baronet had then undertaken the task of regulating insurance, so as to prevent in future the mischiefs complained of. His remedy was to compel insurers to deposit a large sum of money, which was to be answerable for any offence they might commit against the Lottery Act; this at first sight seemed a promising scheme, but in the event it was found ineffectual, for men went on to insure without depositing any money at all, or paying the least regard to the Lottery Act; he therefore moved leave to introduce a new bill on the subject.

Leave was granted accordingly.

The SPEAKER rose to inform the House that he had received a letter from Dixie Coddington, principal serjeant at arms, stating

great bodily infirmity, and praying leave to resign his office of serjeant at arms.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER reminded the House that Mr. Coddington was an old and faithful servant of the house, having filled his department twenty-five years; he therefore wished the House would give some mark of their approbation to his long services by a competent provision for his infirmities; and moved, that an address be presented to his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, praying him to lay before his Majesty the humble desire of the House to this effect, and promising the House would make good the same.—Agreed to *nem. con.* and ordered that the House do on to-morrow resolve into a committee, to take the same into consideration.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 31, 1792.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER moved, that the House do on Monday next, resolve itself into a committee of of supply, and that his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant's speech be referred to the said committee. Agreed to.

He then gave notice, that in the committee of supply he should bring forward a motion for granting an allowance of bread to the infantry on this establishment, which would be attended with some additional expence; a similar allowance had been lately granted to the soldiers on the English establishment, and he trusted that there could not be the least objection to granting it to the soldiers of this country.

Mr. GRATTAN wished he would state the outline of the business.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER, in answer, said that the allowance would be ten pence halfpenny per week in bread for each soldier.

Mr. MARCUS BERESFORD reported the resolution of the committee of the whole House, to whom was referred the motion for an address to his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, to give orders to engineers to view and forthwith repair the breach in the South Wall, occasioned by the inundation on the 24th inst. and that this House will make good the expence; which was agreed to by the house.

Ordered that such members of this house as are of his Majesty's most honourable Privy Council, do wait on his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant with the said address.

The House, according to order, resolved itself into a committee of the whole House, to take into consideration the motion for an address to his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant in favour of Dixie Coddington, Esq; late serjeant at arms; Mr. Mason in the chair.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER moved, that an address be presented to his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant that he would be pleased to lay before his Majesty the humble desire of this House, that he would be graciously pleased to bestow some recompence on Dixie Coddington, Esq; late serjeant at arms, for his long and faithful services, and that this House will make good the same. The motion was agreed to, and on the House being refused—ordered that the said report be received to-morrow.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 1792.

The Right Hon. Mr. MASON reported the resolution of the committee to whom it was referred to take into consideration, the motion for an address to his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, that he would be pleased to lay before his Majesty the humble desire of this house, that he would be graciously pleased to bestow some recompence on Dixie Coddington, Esq; late serjeant at arms, for his long and faithful services, and that this house would make good the same; which was agreed to by the House.

Mr. JOHN WOLFE moved for leave to bring in a bill for the encouragement of agriculture and commerce, by establishing a reciprocal preference between Great Britain and Ireland, in the mutual exportation and importation of corn.

Mr. SECRETARY HOBART gave his decided support to that, as he said he would do to every other measure by which the intercourse and affection between the two countries could be increased, and by which this kingdom must be so considerable a gainer.

Mr. WOLFE accordingly brought in his bill, which was read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time to-morrow.

Mr. GRATTAN moved for a committee, to enquire whether the late regulation entered into for the encouragement of the breweries, and preventing the excessive use of spirituous liquors, had produced the desired effect.

Mr. BERESFORD observed, that of the different excise papers which had been moved for, those relating to the breweries were, he believed, now made up, and would immediately be presented. But that those which related to the importation of spirits, being to be collected from the different port officers throughout the kingdom, it was impossible for them to have them returned to the time for which they were moved, namely, last Christmas.

And he proposed an amendment, instead of the words, "the desired effect," to substitute the words, "any and what effect," as it was impossible, from the shortness of the time during which the experiment had been tried, to say whether it had produced the desired effect or not; which passed in the affirmative.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1792.

Mr. GRATTAN, chairman of the committee appointed yesterday to inquire whether the late act for regulating the retail of spirituous liquors, &c. having mentioned that the committee were impeded in their deliberations by not having received several official papers which he had some days since moved for, and which were absolutely necessary to aid their investigation, took occasion to remark that, so far as the inquiry yet went, it justified his conjectures that the present regulation and reform to the health and minds of the people under the proposal of this act, was nothing more than a mere pretence of revenue, a mere measure to increase a tax destitute of every efficient principle which could tend to effect the objects proposed by the right hon. gentleman, who first proposed the measure, echoed by administration, and avowed by the bill itself.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said, I think I have given arithmetical demonstration that the bill has had its desired effect to a certain degree; but notwithstanding I despair of being able to induce the right hon. gentleman to agree with me in our notions of right and wrong—I mean in debate—though I have shewn that the brewery has increased, from which I infer that more beer has been drank; that the distillery has diminished, from which I infer that less whiskey has been drank; that the number of licenses issued has been much short of the former year, by which it appears that there are not so many places where spirits may be purchased. As to the revenue, though revenue alone was not the object of the bill, I am extremely glad it has not fallen short: the revenue may remain the same, or even rise, but the consumption of the article taxed may diminish, if the quantum of tax on that article be increased.

Mr. GRATTAN. Last year the right hon. gentleman declared that revenue was not at all the object of the bill; he now declares that revenue alone was not its object—an involuntary declaration no doubt; but not the less true for being involuntary. The gentleman says, he rejoices that the revenue has not fallen; I am very sure he does.—I maintain my first opinion, that revenue, and not reform, was the evident object of administration; and I appeal to the returns made of the home distilleries, when, on a comparison of the preceding year, in which the quantity distilled appeared to be but 2,200,000 gallons, with the last, in which the quantity was 2,100,000 gallons, the difference in favour of health and morals was too trifling to deserve mention. What then did the argument of the right hon. bart. go to prove?—He says he is arithmetically right.—What nonsensical talk to an House of Commons?—We know he is arithmetically right, if the distillery be diminished by a single gallon; but he says that it has diminished 100,000 gallons, and that the quantity of ale has increased—that is, the people drink less whiskey, but more ale; so that the quantum of intoxication is the same.

Hon. DENIS BROWNE. I cannot think that arguing arithmetically is quite so absurd or nonsensical a method as the right hon. gentleman would have us believe, especially in a case where figures only can demonstrate facts. The intention of the bill was to restrain the use of spirits—that it certainly has done; and inasmuch as it has done so, it has answered its intention.

Mr. GRATTAN declared himself perfectly indifferent about going into a committee on the subject; as, in his opinion, the bill was utterly inadequate to its intention.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER. I wish the right hon. gentleman would make a motion that would bring this subject fully before the House; for it is not upon my assertion that the measure has succeeded, nor upon another man's assertion that it has not succeeded that the House should implicitly rely: they should have before them all possible evidence on the subject; and when such evidence has made its due impression then they will judge for themselves. I wish to have the enquiry and the discussion as public as possible; I would have it in a committee of the whole House, sitting in the house, not in a select committee sitting in a private chamber.—Would the right hon. gentleman chuse to enter on the business now, or to-morrow?

Right Hon. Mr. BERESFORD said, he every moment expected to see a paper, which the House had ordered, presented at the bar, which would demonstrate every assertion of the Chancellor of the

Exchequer to be true; and from which it would appear that the brewery had risen, since the bill, considerably above what it was in the last year; though in that year it was greater than it had been for five-and-twenty years antecedent. As to all that had been advanced concerning the increase of the consumption of spirits, it certainly was unfounded; the quantity of spirits consumed in the last fourteen years, was not equal to the quantity consumed in the fourteen years antecedent.

Mr. GRATTAN. My assertion is, that the bill has not produced its intended effect; as the consumption of spirits in the last year is not materially diminished. The right hon. gentleman, by way of reply, gets into a puzzled account of twenty-five years and fourteen years, and tells you the brewery is advantaged by the bill; why, Sir, it was impossible the brewery should not receive some advantage from the removal of those insane restrictions by which it was bound.

Right Hon. Mr. BERESFORD. Sir, I follow the right hon. gentleman's example in going back for a number of years: it is what he has done himself, and when he recollects it is his own method, he will not call it puzzling; nor is it puzzling to demonstrate a question by figures, that cannot be demonstrated in any other way.—I assert, that when this bill was introduced, the consumption of spirits was not increased; I assert the brewery was increased; he stated otherwise, and he stated an error.—Since the bill has passed, the consumption of spirits has been diminished, and the brewery has increased; therefore every position of the right hon. gentleman is unfounded; and when the committee sits I will prove it.

Mr. GRATTAN. Whenever the committee shall sit, I will shew that the brewer has been sacrificed to the distiller, and to the obstinate and insane whimsies of revenue empirics—I shall call the brewers to your bar to shew it, and I shall call the merchant to shew that revenue, and not reformation of morals, was the the object in laying the spirit duties; the impolitic tax on rum has destroyed the trade in that article.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER. It is of very little consequence to the morals of the people (if they will get drunk) what they get drunk with; it is however the duty of the legislature, as much as in them lies, to make the means of intoxication as difficult to come at as they possibly can: this can only be done by laying duties as high as the article will bear. For if you lay a duty amounting to a prohibition, or beyond a certain point, you defeat your own purpose—you indemnify the risk of

the smuggler—the article so taxed is produced in greater plenty than ever—the peoples' morals are corrupted in a double sense, by the practice of fraud and the practice of intoxication, and you collect no revenue at all. 'Tis therefore a cause of satisfaction to me, that the revenue on spirits has risen, though the quantity of spirits has fallen; as it demonstrates clearly that the late regulations have not encouraged smuggling; and I am also glad to find, that the diminution in the consumption of spirits has fallen on rum and spirits imported: for surely it is to the advantage of agriculture, that whatever spirits are consumed should be of our own production; and therefore when the right hon. gentleman says that we are ready to sacrifice the morals of the people to collect a tax upon poison, and in the same breath complains that we have destroyed the rum-trade by too high duties; I am at a loss to conceive his meaning.

But, Sir, I wish to have the whole of this business fairly before the House, that it may be discussed in the most public manner; and therefore I do desire, that every paper on the subject be referred to a committee of the whole House, and that it be taken into consideration to-morrow.

Mr. BERESFORD. On one side it has been asserted that the regulations of last year have not had their intended effect: On the other side it is maintained that they have. Every paper desired by the right hon. gentleman is already on your table, except one, that will be ready to-morrow. Therefore, to remove any doubt from the public mind, I wish to go into the investigation of the subject as soon as possible, and I hope nothing will be done that can embarrass or delay it.

Mr. GRATTAN said, far from delaying gentlemen in this investigation, he would do his utmost to accelerate; but at the same time, he feared that what he would offer in the course of the enquiry, would much embarrass them.

A petition was presented from the undertakers of the Boyne navigation, praying aid to extend their works.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said he was very sorry to be so often under the necessity of troubling the House, but his duty as guardian of the public treasure compelled him to it. In the last session, the whole sum of 200,000*l.* granted by parliament, was appropriated to the inland navigation, and at that time no claim was left unsatisfied; he thought it was an act of great wisdom to make this experiment upon a large scale, and he had no doubt of its success; but till the event should be known,

he would steadily resist all new applications. However, when the good effect of what had been already granted should once be seen, he had no doubt that the wisdom and liberality of the House would offer further encouragement, but not till then.—He assured the House he made this opposition with much reluctance; thinking, as he did, extremely well of the underraking for which the present aid was sought.

The petition was ordered to lie upon the table.

A petition was presented, praying aid to improve the port of Arklow, in the county Wicklow, and to make a navigable cut from thence towards the great copper mines of Cronebane.

Ordered to lie on the table.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 1792.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER rose to mention the principles of the proposed increase of pay to the foot soldier. He said, that the principle of this measure was

1st, To take care; that at all times and in all circumstances, 3s. a-week should be appropriated to the soldier's food.

2dly, That a provision should be made to supply all his necessaries, at fixed and specific prices.

3dly, That there should be a surplus of 4½d. a week for the repair of necessaries, which should be accounted to the soldier every two months, when he was to receive the balance of what he had not expended.—The addition to each soldier would be nearly 2d. a day; and near 28,000l. a year. The soldier would be thus secure of comfortable subsistence; better kind of men would be induced to enlist, and desertion would be prevented.

With regard to the intended alteration of the number of regiments, he was instructed to say, that the number would be increased at home, and decreased abroad; the expense would be diminished as to the mere establishment, though he would not say that such a diminution would be effective, as expenses unforeseen might occur: but as the great saving was to be made upon the regiments abroad, to the amount of 22,000l. a-year and upwards, it was to be considered that this was so much saving to the kingdom; and the increase of expense at home not only was less than the decrease abroad, but being within the kingdom, would not be prejudicial.

Mr. GRATTAN said, that with respect to the increase of pay of the private soldier, he was pleased with it; every man must agree with it; nay, they must rejoice in it: as to the change of the establishment he reserved himself.

The House resolved itself into a committee of the whole House to inquire into the effects of the late act for restraining the immoderate use of spirituous liquors among the lower orders of the people; Mr. Townsend, in the chair.

Right Hon. Mr. GRATTAN rose to make some observations on the effects of the bill: he would not say, that no diminution of the quantity of spirits consumed had taken place in consequence of the bill; but he would say, that no effect, hitherto produced by it, gave him reasonable ground to suppose that it would ever answer its intention. The accounts ordered by the House, it was true, were not all come in, particularly that relating to foreign spirits; however it was very easy to account for their alledged decrease—they were more than double their usual price in the places where they are made: this diminution was then from a temporary cause, and not a consequence of the restriction.

As to the home made spirit, one two-and-twentieth part diminution was all that could be alledged; it had diminished 95,000 gallons, which was one two-and-twentieth part of the whole distillation; which no man could call a diminution of intoxication, adequate to the intention of the bill. The use of rum and of brandy certainly was not the grievance of which gentlemen complained who brought in the bill;—no, it was the excessive use of whiskey. The resolution on which the bill was founded, was “to enquire into the cause of the immoderate use of spirits among the lower order of the people.” The lower order of the people intoxicate themselves with whiskey, and therefore, though the importation of rum and brandy be diminished, that diminution does not go to the diminution of intoxication among the lower order. Every one knows that a reduction of one two-and-twentieth is not sufficient; a reduction of one half would not be enough: but even this reduction of one two-and-twentieth is only when we compare the last three quarters, with the three quarters immediately preceding; for if compared with any year previous to 1788, the reduction will turn out to be an increase; yet every one will allow that too much whiskey was drank in the year 1787.

It had been alledged that the brewery had increased one-eighth part; but surely no man would say this was enough. However, as the necessary documents were not yet before the committee—as they had not yet examined at this bar, as he hoped they would do, the brewers or the merchants concerned in the importation of rum, he would offer no motion; but his present opinion was, that the brewery had not received adequate advantage, that the distillery had not been sufficiently checked, and that the diminution of the importation of rum arose from temporary causes.

Sir HERCULES LANGRISHE rose to observe what appeared a leading error in the argument of his right hon. friend, and could only have proceeded from inadvertence. His right hon. friend had alledged that whiskey being diminished by one two-and-twentieth part—intoxication was diminished but in the same proportion, which was just nothing. But that was not a fair argument; for whiskey was now used in the place of foreign spirits, and the diminution of the spirits, in place of which it was now used, should be added to the diminution of whiskey, which would much increase the proportion.

The Right Hon. Mr. BERESFORD said, he was just rising to make the same observation the hon. baronet had made in language so much better than his; but the argument went a great deal further; as it was a matter of known certainty that whenever the importation of rum was great, the distillation of whiskey was low—when the quantity of whiskey distilled was but one million of gallons, but in the last three quarters, that is, since the bill had passed, the importation of rum had greatly diminished, and yet the distillation of whiskey had diminished also. The decrease of whiskey in the three quarters has been 98,279 gallons; at the very time that the importation of rum has diminished in a much greater proportion.

As to the brewery, it has increased one-fifth within the last three quarters, and this at a time when malt has been from 20s. to 22s. a barrel, a price never known in Ireland; yet gentlemen affect to doubt of the prosperity of the brewery.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER. The right hon. gentleman (Mr. Grattan) has alledged, as a cause for the decrease of the importation of spirits, “the advanced price of those spirits in the places of their growth;” now this position I beg leave to assume—what then will follow as a natural deduction? If the increase of price in any article diminishes the use of that article (as it certainly does), then the increased price of whiskey, arising from the increased duty thereon, must diminish the use of whiskey, and consequently lessen the quantity of intoxication in the country; and it will also follow that we do not draw a revenue from encouraging poison and destroying the people, but from discouraging poison and preserving the people.—The right hon. gentleman says this check to the importation of rum is but temporary, and whenever the price falls the importation will return; but if a tax remains, the diminution will be permanent: for if now people are obliged by their habits to supply the place of rum, the price of which they cannot afford, by whiskey which is cheaper, it follows that there is now just so much more whiskey distilled than otherwise would, as supplies the place of the rum which would be drank if the high price had not prevented it; and

whenever rum shall be imported for the use of those who prefer it to whiskey, here will be then just so much less of the latter spirit distilled as they shall use of the first.

Upon the whole, if the consumption of spirits has diminished one-eighth, and the brewing has advanced one-fifth, I am ready to submit to the judgment of the House, whether the brewery has not received a most decided preference over the distillery.

Hon. DENIS BROWNE. I thought that the excessive use of spirits, meaning spirits of every kind, was the evil complained of, and therefore I gave my vote last year to the bill, hoping that the diminution would fall upon foreign spirits, as I am glad to see it has done. Were I to suppose that the regulations of the bill would destroy the home distillery, and consequently injure the agriculture of this kingdom, I never, while it would give a preference to foreign spirits, would have voted for it: but I thought quite otherwise, and the event has justified that opinion. The importation of foreign spirits is very much reduced, and this compels people to use the produce of our own distillery; yet notwithstanding, that distillery is somewhat reduced: but the brewery has increased, and thereby the interests of agriculture are supported. I am therefore happy at having supported a bill which bids fair to be of essential service to the country.

The committee adjourned to Wednesday.

The House being resumed,

Sir HERCULES LANGRISHE said, it was his intention this day to have presented the bill for the relief of the Roman Catholics; but he had not sufficient time to prepare it; he hoped, however, by to morrow to have it ready, when it would be read once, and then move to have it printed.

Hon. Mr. STEWART moved, that the proper officer lay before the House a list of the Popish ecclesiastics that have taken the Oath of the 13th and 14th of George III. and who have registered according to law.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 1792.

Read a third time, passed, and ordered to the Lords, the bill for the increase of agriculture and commerce, by establishing a reciprocal preference in the corn trade between this kingdom and Great Britain.

Mr. STEWART (of Killimoon) presented a petition from Sir Henry Hartstonge, Bart. complaining of an undue election and

return for the county of Limerick; which was received, read, and ordered to be taken into consideration on Monday the 27th instant.

Mr. GRATTAN presented a petition from the corporation of the House of Industry, praying aid. Ordered to lie on the table.

Sir EDWARD CROFTON, on behalf of the Arigna Iron Company, moved that the committee appointed to take their petition into consideration, might be empowered to examine evidence in the most solemn manner. The improvement which that company had made, and the immense benefits which had resulted to the country from their exertions, were of a nature too important not to be brought forward in the most authenticated form.

Ordered accordingly.

Sir HERCULES LANGRISHE, in a short speech, introduced his bill for the relief of Roman Catholics; it was read for the first time. Sir Hercules said, it was a matter of so much importance, that least its objects should be misconceived, he thought it necessary that it should be printed, and that a sufficient time should be given to have it fully understood; he trusted when understood, it would be approved by every man in the nation. He moved that the bill be printed. It is as follows:

ROMAN CATHOLIC BILL.

" WHEREAS by an act passed in this kingdom in the sixth year of Queen Anne, entitled, ' An act to explain and amend an act to prevent Papists being solicitors,' and by another act passed in this kingdom in the first year of King George the Second, entitled, ' An act for regulating the admission of barristers at law, six clerks and attornies, and of other persons into offices and employments, and for preventing Papists practising as solicitors, and for further strengthening the Protestant interest in this kingdom,' it is required, that every person who shall apply to be called to the bar or to be admitted an attorney, shall, before such an application or admission, or taking upon them to practise as aforesaid, take and subscribe the several oaths, and repeat and subscribe the declaration in and by the said acts respectively mentioned or directed.

" And whereas it is deemed expedient to enable his Majesty's subjects of Ireland, professing the Roman Catholic religion, to become barristers at law, and to practise as attornies, solicitors and notaries, upon their taking the oath of allegiance herein after mentioned.

" Be it enacted, by the King's most excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal and Commons in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, that the oaths and declaration in and by

the acts respectively required to be taken and subscribed by every person who shall be admitted or practise as a counsellor or barrister at law, attorney, solicitor or notary, shall, from and after the twenty-fourth day of June, in the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety-two, be no longer required to be taken or subscribed by any person professing the Roman Catholic religion, as a qualification to enable him to be admitted to the bar, or to act as an attorney, solicitor or notary; but the oath of allegiance appointed to be taken and subscribed, by an act passed in the thirteenth and fourteenth years of his present Majesty's reign, entitled 'An act to enable his Majesty's subjects of whatever persuasion to testify their allegiance to him,' shall, from and after the said twenty-fourth day of June, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-two, be administered, taken and subscribed to and by persons professing the Roman Catholic religion, to be admitted barristers and to practise as attorneys, solicitors and notaries, have the same effect and operation to all intents and purposes, as the taking and subscribing of the oaths and declaration, in the room of which the same is hereby substituted, could have had, any law to the contrary notwithstanding. Provided always, that nothing herein contained shall extend to enable or qualify any person to hold or enjoy the place or office of King's counsel.

"And whereas by an act passed in this kingdom in the sixth year of Queen Anne, it is enacted, 'that no attorney or solicitor shall take, keep or have any Papist or reputed Papist to be his apprentice or clerk.'

"Be it enacted, that it shall and may be lawful to and for any attorney or solicitor to have, keep or employ as an apprentice or clerk any person professing the Roman Catholic religion, who shall have previously duly taken and subscribed in his Majesty's Court of King's Bench the said oath of allegiance set out in this said act of the thirteenth and fourteenth years of the reign of his present Majesty, and that from the passing of this act, the words following, (to wit) 'and that I will not knowingly take an apprentice or employ as clerk or solicitor any person of the Popish religion,' shall be omitted in the oath required by an act passed in the seventh year of the reign of King George the Second, entitled, 'An act for the amendment of the law in relation to Popish solicitors, and for remedying other mischiefs in relation to the practitioners in the several courts of law, required to be taken by every master in Chancery, fix clerk of the Court of Chancery, barrister at law, attorney and officer of any of the courts in Dublin, and every deputy of such officer and every solicitor.'

"And whereas by the said last mentioned act, it is enacted, that if any person admitted a barrister, attorney or solicitor, shall marry any woman of the popish religion, such person shall be deemed a papist, and be disabled from being a barrister, attorney or solicitor,

“ Be it enacted, that so much of the said recited act be and the same is hereby repealed, and that every person so married or marrying, being otherwise duly entitled, may, notwithstanding such marriage continue or be admitted to practice as a barrister, attorney or solicitor.

“ And whereas by an act passed in the first year of the reign of King George the Second, entitled, ‘ An act for regulating the admission of barristers at law, six clerks and attornies, and of other persons into offices and employments; and for preventing Papists practising as solicitors, and for further strengthening the Protestant interest in this kingdom,’ it is enacted that every person converted from the Popish to the Protestant religion, or born of Popish parent or parents, who, from and after the first day of August, one thousand seven hundred and twenty eight, shall apply to be called to the bar, or to be admitted a six clerk or attorney, or shall take upon him to practise as a solicitor, or to act as an officer or deputy officer as aforesaid, shall upon such application, or before taking on him to act or practise as aforesaid, prove before the Lord Chancellor or the commissioner of the Great Seal, the two Chief Justices, the Chief Baron, the justices of the one bench and of the other, and the barons of his Majesty’s Court of Exchequer in Ireland for the time being, or any two or more of them (of which the Lord Chancellor or one of the commissioners of the Great Seal, or one of the said Chief Justices, or the Chief Baron, for the time being, shall be one) by sufficient witness or witnesses upon oath, which they or any two of them are hereby authorized to administer, that such person has professed himself and continued to be a Protestant for the space of two years immediately before the time of making such proof.

“ Be it enacted, that so much of the said act as is herein recited be and the same is hereby repealed.

“ And whereas by an act passed in the twenty first and twenty-second years of his present Majesty, entitled, ‘ An act to regulate the admission of barristers at law,’ it is enacted that no person shall be admitted to the degree of a barrister at law who shall not have been received and admitted into the society of King’s Inns as a student five years previous to the time of his applying to be admitted to the said degree; and it is also by the said act further enacted, that no person shall be admitted into the said society as a student who shall not at the time of his admission be of the Protestant religion.

“ And whereas by the last recited clause persons professing the Popish religion were not capable of complying with or fulfilling such previous qualification, to be admitted to the said degree of barrister at law.

“ Be it enacted, by the authority aforesaid, that all and every such person or persons professing the Popish religion, who on or

before the twenty-seventh day of June next, shall have performed every other requisite enjoined by this or any other law or usage to qualify them for being admitted to the degree of barrister at law, may be admitted to the same on paying the usual fees to said society, although he or they shall not have been admitted as student or students previous to the time of his or their applying to be admitted to said degree; and that from and after the passing this act so much of the said last recited act as enacts, that no person shall be admitted into the said society as a student who shall not at the time of his admission be of the Protestant religion, be and is hereby repealed.

“ And whereas an act passed in the ninth year of King William the Third, entitled, ‘ An act to prevent Protestants intermarrying with Papists,’ and whereas it is no longer necessary to continue the said act in force.

“ Be it therefore enacted that the said act shall be and the same is hereby repealed. Provided always that the repeal thereof shall not in any sort affect any suit heretofore commenced and now depending, grounded on the said act.

“ And be it further enacted, that so much of an act passed in this kingdom in the second year of Queen Anne, entitled, ‘ An act to prevent the further growth of Popery,’ as subjects Protestants intermarrying with Papists either within the kingdom or in parts without the kingdom, to the pains, penalties or disabilities inflicted by the said last-mentioned act of the ninth year of King William the Third, shall be and the same are hereby repealed.

“ Provided always, and be it enacted, that nothing herein contained shall extend or be construed to extend to enable any Protestant who now is or hereafter shall be married to a Popish wife to vote at any election of representatives to serve in parliament, other than as they may by laws in being before the passing of this act.

“ And be it further enacted, that it shall and may be lawful to and for Protestants and persons professing the Roman Catholic religion to intermarry, and to and for archbishops, bishops and all persons having lawful jurisdiction to grant licenses for marriages to be celebrated between Protestants and persons professing the Roman Catholic religion, and for clergymen to publish the banns of marriage between such persons, and that clergymen of the established church duly celebrating such marriages shall not be liable to any pain, penalty or censure for celebrating the same, any law to the contrary notwithstanding.

“ And whereas it is not any longer necessary to continue an act passed in the seventh year of the reign of King William the Third, entitled, ‘ An Act to restrain foreign education.’

“ Be it enacted, that the same act be and is hereby repealed.

“ And whereas by act passed in the twenty-first and twenty-second years of his present majesty's reign, entitled, ‘ An act to

allow persons professing the Popish religion to teach school in this kingdom, and for regulating the education of Papists, and also to repeal parts of certain laws relative to the guardianship of their children,' it is required that any person of the Popish religion who shall teach or keep school, shall first obtain the license of the ordinary of the diocese, and whereas it is not expedient any longer to make such license necessary.

" Be it enacted, that it shall not, from the passing of this act, be necessary that the license of the ordinary shall be obtained in order to authorize any person of the Roman Catholic religion to keep or teach school; provided always, that such person shall in all other respects perform the requisites required by and conform himself to the said last-mentioned act.

" And whereas by an act passed in the eighth year of Queen Anne, entitled, ' An act for explaining and amending an act to prevent the further growth of Popery,' it is enacted that no Papist or Papists who are or shall be permitted to follow any trade, craft, or keep more than two apprentices, and that for no less a term than seven years.

" Be it enacted that so much of the said act be and is hereby repealed."

Sir HERCULES then moved, that the bill be read a second time on Saturday next.

Mr. STAPLES said, he hoped full time would be allowed for the members of that House to take the sense of the kingdom at large on a subject in which the constituent body were so deeply concerned; for if ever there was a momentous subject before the parliament of Ireland, it certainly was this; and therefore it ought to be well known what the Protestants were willing to surrender, before the House should be determined to grant. He would ask the right honourable gentleman who had seconded the motion for the bill, whether the concessions which the bill contained were sufficient to satisfy the Roman Catholics? or whether these concessions were all that he intended to grant them? He wished to know the *ne plus ultra*.

Hon. DENIS BROWNE said, that if time only was desired to consider the purports of the bill, the day proposed for the second reading by the hon. baronet was sufficient; if the intention was to suppress the bill, certainly it would be better for that purpose to defer the relief intended to a more distant period. The question asked by the hon. gentleman of the right hon. secretary, was singular—Whether he could answer, that the provisions of the bill were to be the *ne plus ultra* of the Catholics? Certainly the right hon. gentleman would find it difficult to answer for the future expectations of three millions of people. The Catholics offered, as a security for their attachment to the consti-

tution, the approved loyalty of long and disturbed times. He said this was not the stage for debating this question; when that time came, he would offer his opinions on it; that he knew it would be impossible at any time to combat bigotry, prejudice, and love of power, by argument; but that it would be impossible for any exertion of human ingenuity or sophistry, to support the absurd principle of keeping a numerous and deserving description of our fellow-subjects, in the degraded situation they now stood.

Sir HERCULES LANGRISHE said, it would have been impossible for him to answer the hon. gentleman, had not the declaration of an host of Roman Catholics already answered him in the public papers—"That grateful for what had already been granted, they would with joy and humility receive whatever the wisdom and liberality of parliament thought proper to bestow." As to the obscure and contemptible persons whose names filled the columns of newspapers, declaring a contrary sentiment, he had no regard to them, while his opinion was supported by the wise, the good, and the respectable.

Right Hon. Major HOBART said, he would not rise in the present stage of the bill, but out of respect to the hon. gentleman who had called upon him. He said he would not have the presumption to answer for so great a body as the Roman Catholics; their good conduct for a series of years past was at once the best proof of their wishes and their deserts. As to the question, whether this was to be the *ne plus ultra*, he would only say, that the House would never find him disposed to take any part without their full concurrence.

Mr. VANDELEUR, though he approved the principle of the bill, thought it a measure of such magnitude that the country ought to be consulted on it.

Right Hon. Mr. OGLE. Every man must see the necessity of giving full time for deliberation in the progress of this bill. I think, Sir, that every Protestant in the land ought to be consulted on it; therefore let it be now printed and circulated through the country, as it would be extremely indecent to precipitate this business, without consulting our constituents. For myself, Sir, though I never refused the Roman Catholics every reasonable liberty, this bill I think should be well weighed; and when we come to decide, I hope every gentleman will consult his own heart, and his own judgment upon it.

Sir EDWARD NEWENHAM said, he hoped the number of copies to be printed of this bill would not be limited to the number of members of the House; every Protestant in Ireland had an in-

terest in the Protestant establishment, and should be consulted whether or not he was willing to resign that interest.

Sir HENRY CAVENDISH said, he well recollected that the House some years since had put the nation to the cost of printing seven or eight thousand copies of a bill, to be circulated among the people: he hoped they would not now do the same thing; but if any member, at his own expence, chose to print and circulate the bill, he was at liberty so to do.

The bill was ordered to be printed, and to be read a second time on Saturday.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1792.

Sir EDWARD NEWENHAM presented a petition, praying aid towards completing the New Gaol, at present building for the county of Dublin.

Mr. DAY said, that the building of a gaol for the county of Dublin should be considered as a national affair, and therefore it would be unequitable to levy money for it on the county solely. It was obliged to afford accommodation to prisoners from every part of the kingdom.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER thought this a local work. He felt himself therefore obliged to resist the application. He did so upon the principle that it was for the advantage of the county that a door should not be thrown open, which would expose the public purse to requests for matters of local convenience.

Sir EDWARD NEWENHAM said, he hoped the county of Dublin would be treated with as much indulgence as any other county in Ireland.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER replied, certainly. He had every respect for the county of Dublin and the gentlemen of it. He was sorry that the duty of his office obliged him to oppose the prayer of the petition.

Mr. STEWART (of Killymoon) moved, that the agent of the Presbyterian ministers should lay before the House an account of all the sums of money received from the treasury, for the use of such ministers, and also each man's particular share.

Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY seconded the motion.

Mr. STEWART declared that he made this motion with no intention of embarrassing administration, but with a view to bring the attention of the House to a body of men who were by no means recompensed according to their wants or their merits. It was a subject of importance, as it concerned no fewer than 400,000 of his Majesty's subjects professing that religion. He was sensible that he was inadequate to agitate a question of so much moment. When he should bring it forward, however, he would let it stand upon its own merits.

Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY intimated an intention of postponing his intended motion until Wednesday. He said he found that a sum of money was to be raised by an additional duty on sugars, and the situation of the finances did not require an addition. The great roads of the kingdom were in a very bad and shameful state, and considerable sums were due on them, which prevented all hope of their repair. It could not, he said, have escaped the attention of the Speaker, that these roads were made when the country was in a state of poverty and civil confusion. The funds arising from them were exhausted in paying the interest due on their debts. His intention, therefore, was to apply the produce of the taxation to the repair of the great roads. He would also move, for masters to be appointed, who should be compelled to act in a vigorous manner, to accomplish the intention. His idea was to provide foot ways for the common people; for he thought it a shocking sight to see the poor wading up to their middle upon the public roads, merely because they were unable to buy a horse. He would give time to administration to give consideration to the subject. He concluded with moving, that the call of the house be adjourned until Wednesday next.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER replied, that where a probability appeared of a redundancy in the treasury, he should have no objection to apply it to any laudable purpose. He admitted the hon. gentleman's observation to be just. The roads of the country were objects of public utility and public convenience. But he could by no means agree to pay off the whole of the debt to which they were subject. That, however, would be matter for future enquiry. The tax, to which allusion had been made, was rendered unavoidable from an observance of equalization in the rate of duties with Great Britain, without which we could not enjoy the advantages of a colony trade.—Another observation that he must make, was, that high duty did not always ensure an increase of revenue, as it diminished consumption. He would, however, pledge himself to nothing.

Mr. PONSONBY said, that as to paying off the whole debt, that might be a matter of future deliberation. His idea was this—In 1786 a compact was entered into, that Government

should not call for new taxes; as a grant was made by which their revenue was raised to their expences. If the reformation which he hoped to accomplish, was to be defrayed out of the ordinary taxes, then an opportunity would be given to government, for infringing the terms of their own agreement. They might tell us that we ourselves broke in upon their system. He thought that in four years, during which term the new tax was to continue, a sufficient sum might accumulate, to accomplish the purpose. It was not necessary, all at once, to pay off the debt to which the roads were subject.

Mr. CORRY said that this was not the time to debate the question. He should, however, be happy to see the hon. gentleman fix upon a tax more permanent, to accomplish his wishes. Than that which he had selected, none could be more variable.

The hon. gentleman had appealed to the chair, which could not then answer for itself. He would, however, speak from his own knowledge, that the gentleman who filled it had given the subject a mature deliberation, and had gone so far as to have digested a plan to put them in proper order.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER requested that the subject might be postponed until he should have stated his situation, as minister of finance in the country; which was acceded to.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER gave notice that he was going to move a resolution, which operated as a bar against all applications for grants of public money. It was the most disagreeable part of his duty; it might be productive of disappointment, to gentlemen for whom he had a high respect: but he firmly conceived that the country was benefited by the important resistance of all such applications. If there should, at any time, be a redundancy in the treasury, it was incumbent on the House to consider, not only what undertaking was meritorious, but what was most meritorious. He should therefore move—

“ That no money be granted for the building or repairing of any pier, quay, harbour, canal or navigation; or for any colliery, road or bridge, or for mill-work; or for any charitable institution, which has not regularly received aid from parliament, except hospitals; nor for the repair of churches; nor to any individual or company of manufacturers; nor in consideration of any buildings, for carrying on manufactures, unless revenues for the same have been hitherto provided.”

The only difference, he observed in the present resolution, and that moved every session, was, that an exception was made in favour of hospitals.—The lunatics of the metropolis were confined in the House of Industry, and a sum had been expended by the governors of St. Patrick's Hospital in a building which, if assist-

ed, would receive them in future. To receive lunatics in the House of Industry was certainly a confusion of objects, and the intention was to transfer them to the new building, when assistance was given to the governors.

Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY and Mr. GRATTAN hoped that the resolution would not militate with objects which they had in contemplation, for the public benefit.

Mr. DAY repeated that the building of a gaol near Kilmainham was a national, rather than a county business. It was obliged to receive prisoners who were transported from every part of the kingdom. He should therefore move, as an amendment to the resolution, that after the words "except hospitals," be added, "and except the new gaol now building for the county of Dublin."

This was opposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer; and the question being put, the amendment was negatived without a division. The resolution then passed.

The House resolved itself into the committee of supply; the Right Hon. Mr. Mafon in the chair.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER rose and said, that his sentiments had been anticipated by gentlemen of great weight on the other side of the House. He acknowledged to have avowed, that the finances of the country were in a more favourable state than at any former period. The assertion he would abide by whatever inference or deduction might be deduced from it. He had, since he came into his present office, always avoided the expedient of loans or new taxes; convinced that the growing prosperity of the country would be sufficient to defray the expences of government, without their aid. It was true, that, to come upon the same scale of equalization with England, a new tax would be laid upon sugars. But this was not from poverty in the state; and though there was no great redundancy in the treasury, yet there was so much as would diminish the interest of our funded debt, and, in the event, totally annihilate it. He could not consent to apply it to any such purpose as had been proposed in the course of the night; for we had casual expences—expences, not of prodigality, but of necessity; and if no resource was to be had for them in a redundancy of the revenue, the establishments could only be supported by new taxes.

The expences of the country to Lady-day, had

been exceeded in the former year by the revenue in the sum of	—	—	—	£. 29,000
In the present year by	—	—	—	61,749

So that, by a comparison of balances, it appeared that there was an advantage of

F 2

32,749

As out of this sum of money, 28,000*l.* had been paid, which had been voted for armaments, this flattering prospect also, while it promised to diminish our debt, provided besides for the expences which must attend the growing prosperity of the country.

As to casual expences, they had been this year very great. King's letters amounted to 100,000*l.* But these had been induced by the new additions to the Parliament House, and other acts of the legislature. The printing of the statutes alone amounted to 10,000*l.* The new bridge over the Liffey to 10,000*l.*: with a variety of other casual expences, which amounted in the whole to 104,000*l.* These casual expences for the last seven years, amounted to no less a sum than 359,000*l.* If the funds, he said, out of which they had been defrayed had been diverted into other channels, as had been proposed to the House in the course of the night, where would provision for them be found? If they were to give away revenue, and to receive none, the consequence must be, that we would plunge in debt. So long, therefore, as there was redundancy, he would be for applying it to the discharge of arrears.

He then proceeded, in a masterly manner, to state the finances of the country.

The balances in the treasury at Lady-day last, were,

	—	—	—	£. 78,692
In collector's hands	—	—	—	238,834
In Stamp-office	—	—	—	32,900
Post-office	—	—	—	12,000
4 Shilling tax	—	—	—	8,000

With other balances, making in the whole — 268,960

The arrears were on the civil list	—	155,272
on extraordinaries	—	667,854
on other heads making in the } whole of arrears		308,129

Difference between arrears } and balances	arrears balances	308,129 268,960
--	---------------------	--------------------

39,169

The produce of the last year, he is said, would be found to exceed that of the preceding, ending Michaelmas-day, in the sum of 35,444*l.* The produce of the present half year was 513,347*l.* including a deposit in the bank of 30,000*l.*

The revenue of last year amounted to £. 1,029,000

The revenue of this year would amount to 1,064,865

The expences of this year, including military establishment, ordnance, royal hospital, infirmary in the park, barracks, exceedings on concordatum, military contingencies. bridges, committee

of public accounts, linen board, county infirmaries, public coal yards, lottery expences, imprest accounts, inspector of prisons, police, officers of the house, charities, bounties and a new expence, transport of felons; amounted in the whole to — — —

£. 1,095,573

But several of these were occasional, and would not make part of a future charge. They caused an exceeding of the estimate by —

37,000

But if the product of the lottery was applied to discharge the arrears, and that the taxes would not fall short, which he might venture to predict that they would not, a fund would accumulate for discharging the whole of the arrears in a single year. When a surplus accrues in the revenue, to apply it to discharge arrears, he contended, was as necessary as to vote taxes for support of the establishment.

He was happy to state that this country had long struggled with an unfunded debt, and that it had now got the better of it. He could not avoid adding, that, while government abstained from taxation or loans, they never abstained from affording assistance to public works. The charities which had been aided; the buildings which were carrying on; every work of public utility was a proof of it. They had at the same time obtained a system of equalization so much desired; in rendering the revenue equal to the expences of the country. As to the encrease of expences, that must be imputed to circumstances which could neither have been foreseen nor avoided. He hoped they would not be made a ground of argument. Though we might encrease our expences, if we kept pace with our revenue, and that there was no particular article which could be laid hold of as culpable, it was not a fair object of censure. When the redundancy should be applied to discharge our arrears, with a revenue equal to our expence, he thought that Ireland had as good a right to look forward to prosperity and opulence as any nation whatever.

Mr. GRATTAN remarked, that from the confession of the minister of finance, there was an excess of revenue over expenditure. There appeared to be a redundancy of 37,000*l.* last year, and a probability of 50,000*l.* this year. It followed that there was no occasion for a new tax upon sugar. He was therefore for applying its produce in three modes.

1*st.* As his honourable friend (Mr. Ponsonby) had suggested, to the repair of the great roads.

2*d.* To increase the income of the dissenting clergymen of the Presbyterian church, as hinted by Mr. Stewart, of Killymoon.

3*d.* To free the peasantry of the kingdom from the oppression of hearth money.

For the latter he proposed to have a specific plan, which he would submit to the House at a future day.

Mr. GRATTAN then animadverted on the statement and positions of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and observed, that the right hon. baronet had proved two things—that the expences of government without the lottery exceeded the taxes which were thought sufficient to equalize—and that it is by the profits of the lottery, that is, by applying to peace the resources of war, that government is able to exist.

Indeed from the file in which the right hon. gentleman talked of that mischievous mode of revenue, he seemed to consider it as one of the ordinary resources of the state; for his part he should ever reprobate it as such, and to a prudent minister it would be one of those resources to which he would recur with most reluctance.

From this statement it appeared that the excess of revenue above expence had arisen not from the œconomy of Government, but from the misapplication of the public funds—by appropriating that to the establishments which ought to have gone to the debt.

Another circumstance in the statement which called for observation as tending to convey a fallacious idea of the state of finance and of the proportion between expenditure and revenue was—the deposit of 30,000*l.* from the bank—which certainly was not a part of the ordinary income—nay, was a casualty that could not again recur—and yet it was included as part of the revenue of the country, and was used to prove that under the auspices of the present ministers the expenditure of the country and its revenue were approaching to equality!

Taking the statement of the right hon. gentleman however as authentic and accurate—granting that the revenue of the country has in the last year produced a redundancy of 30,000*l.* and in the next year would probably produce a redundancy of 50,000*l.* more—it followed, as a necessary reference; that the funds of this country were in no need whatsoever of any addition. The produce of the intended tax on sugar, therefore, needed not to be added to the revenue—that was already redundant, and since that redundancy obviously resulted from the increased produce of the taxes, not from the diminished expenditure of administration, it remained for the House to consider to what great and beneficial public purposes this redundancy might be applied.

An hon. friend [George Ponsonby] had suggested the propriety of discharging the debts due by the public roads, which exhaust their funds and deprive them of necessary repairs. Another hon. friend of his had mentioned the state of the dissenting clergy, and spoken of granting them a more comfortable provision. Both these were objects, than which none could be found more worthy the attention of parliament—nor could there possibly be a better fund for effecting them, than this redundancy of revenue. In the hands of any ministry it was dangerous to leave unappropriated wealth—it was a temptation to extravagance, which few ministers would be able to withstand—it was a temptation pecu-

liarily dangerous to the present ministry, with whose weakness in that instance the country was well acquainted—the more so as an encrease of expenditure with them is synonymous with an encrease of influence—Besides these two great and useful objects, there was another, not less worthy the attention of the House, which he would take leave to suggest—it was to remove the oppression of the hearth tax from the poorer part of the peasantry.—A right hon. friend of his, not in the country [Mr. Conolly] had applied himself sedulously for several sessions to effectuate this laudable purpose, without effect—Why? because there could not at that time be any means found to supply the deficiency, which the repeal of this tax would necessarily occasion in the hereditary revenue, unless by laying on new taxes—that difficulty is now removed—for here is a fund, if the statement of the finances be true, more than adequate to supply the deficiency, without laying on any new burden.

It was the duty of this House to consult the ease and happiness of the poor, here was an instance in which both might be promoted, and it was the more necessary for the House to avail themselves of it as the humanity of the British legislature had long since set them the example.—On this subject he had a motion to propose to the House which he should lay before them at a future day.

The right hon. gentleman he said, had congratulated himself and co adjutors with a good deal of self-complacency, that the different items of the public accounts had not been objected to in the committee. Why, Sir, said he, there are many items among them which we suffered to pass without animadversion, not because we knew it was vain for us to deny giving them the appearance of parliamentary sanction by bringing forward questions of which we knew, from repeated experience, what would have been the fate.—It would have been folly in gentlemen, knowing as they do, the temper and the constitution of this House, to put a question on every undeserved pension—on every corrupt and superfluous salary. He has said also that the House were in the habits of approving the several heads of which the accounts consist. If by the House he means his majority, he is right—it was that majority that approved and sanctioned them—not we, for we have formerly condemned, and do now most heartily condemn innumerable articles under the different heads.—We condemn the civil list as extravagant. We condemn the revenue establishment as extravagant and corrupt. We condemn the pension list as shamefully extravagant—and the concordatum as no less so—but we have not repeated our complaints against this extravagance in those instances, because we well knew how inefficacious those complaints would have been.

Mr. GRATTAN then proceeded to state the enormous encrease that had taken place under each of those heads since the year 1785,

when the new taxes were granted; and proved that the total encrease of annual expence in them amounted to upwards of 90,000*l*. In that year, when the taxes were granted on their own estimate, the expences of Government, including parliamentary grants, was 1,000,800*l*. The statement of the right honourable gentleman for the next year is 1,095,000*l*.—an increase of 87,000*l*. above its own estimate, on the faith of which it obtained its taxes.—But this was not the whole of the encrease—the encreased expence of collecting the revenue is to be added—In 1784 that expence was 176 000*l*.—It is now 251,000*l*.—The encrease 74,000*l*. to be added to the other encrease of nearly 90,000*l*.

It was unnecessary, he said, to enter into a minute detail of particulars.—The accounts as stated by the right honourable baronet himself proved the assertion—for, notwithstanding the encrease of revenue, the expenditure of ministers still exceeded it; and it was only the lottery of the right honourable gentlemen that supported the administration with whom he acted—and for his ingenuity in finance of that kind he allowed him every praise, at the same time that of the mode of finance itself he totally disapproved.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER did not think it would be safe in Government to engage in schemes of which the expence could not be less than 150,000*l*. annually, depending on the small redundancy of revenue and on the temporary and casual revenue that might arise from the tax on sugar.—He thought it would be wise in the House to wait until it should be known whether the tax would really be productive before they determined on the manner of applying its produce. Even if the tax should bring in a considerable revenue, and if the actual redundancy were much greater than it was, he thought it would be better to apply it to the discharge of the arrears of unfunded debt. While such arrears existed, it should be the first object of Government to extinguish them.

He professed himself still of opinion that if government were peculiarly culpable in the expenditure of the public money, they would have been blamed in the committee of accounts, which had been kept open for eight days—As to the lottery, he granted it was not part of the ordinary revenue some years ago—but it was the duty of the servants of the crown to look to every source of revenue in preference to taxes.—On the three objects mentioned by the right honourable gentleman as worthy the attention of the House at this time, he thought it was not now necessary for him to give any opinion; he should therefore reserve it for another occasion.

Mr. ARTHUR BROWNE said he often heard the minister talk of encreased revenue, but never a word of a diminution of the public burdens. To the boast of encreased revenue, &c. he was

glad to find his right honourable friend had now put an end, by proposing an object to which that encrease should be applied. The right honourable baronet asks, said he, what we blame?—I may put my hand on any one head of the public accounts, and point out extravagance in it. This I can instance in particulars by mentioning the salaries of the revenue establishment where there was a charge of 8000*l.* manifestly superfluous—by mentioning also the head of king's letters, in which there had been an increase of 40,000*l.* per annum, since the year 1784, of which the greater part was profusion. The statement of the right honourable gentleman then was not so glorious to him, since it could not be pretended that the redundancy was in any measure owing to economy or retrenchment. I wish gentleman had paid a little more attention to the public accounts—it would prevent them from being imposed on by fallacious and imposing statements—They would have perceived extravagance in most parts of them—which I am ready to point out and prove if called upon, after making every allowance for bounties and other expenditures incurred at the desire of the House.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER rose again; he allowed that the expences of Government had of late years greatly increased, but of that increase the greater part was incurred by votes of that House which passed without a single negative. He instanced the expence of the late armament, 53,000*l.*—the fortifying of the harbour of Cork—the new bridge—new buildings of the Parliament-house—bounties, &c. all which amounted to more than 100,000*l.* The acts of the House had influence, even on the civil list, for instance, the increase of the Judges salaries; they had also influence on concordatum—but all this addition was beneficial to the kingdom; and of the talked-of increase on the king's letters, all could be well accounted for—none of it was for Government business.

Mr. BROWN said he would pledge himself to prove, under that head, 40,000*l.* useless charges—or worse.

Mr. EGAN ironically described his joy at finding from the statement of the financier that administration were redeeming the profligacy of their other measures by economy; but lamented that this joy was quickly terminated by the conduct of the minister, who exemplified the adage—Brag is a good dog, but Holdfast is a better: he boasted of a redundancy till some plan was proposed to apply it usefully, and then explained away all the boasts he had made.

He was warm in the praise of the plan proposed by Mr. Grattan, for employing the redundant revenue, and expatiated considerably on the wretchedness of the peasantry, and the op-

pressive nature of the hearth-tax. He could not think administration would set their face against a measure so useful as the repeal of that tax. If they did so on the ground of inability, he would take up the pension list, and in the exorbitance of its increase, shew how they might have been enabled to agree to this measure of beneficence.

Right Hon. Sir HENRY CAVENDISH said, gentlemen did not attribute the wretchedness of the poor to its true cause. It could not be the payment of two shillings a year that obliged them throughout the year to live on potatoes and water; the landlord and the middleman were the cause of it. The people of England, he said, lived comfortably, because there the landlord sees his tenants: here the injudicious mode of setting lands by middlemen, who grind the faces of the poor is, in a great measure, the cause of the general wretchedness. As to the increase of expence by Government, he thought they should be thanked for it; 130,000*l.* paid in bounty for corn, was good ground for praise; this increased expence, was a necessary consequence of a very wise system adopted by Government, under which this country had risen to an unlooked-for degree of prosperity, and for which he would thank even opposition, since it was with that union of great families that this system originated.

Mr. GRATTAN replied. If the right honourable baronet, had explained a little what that system was, of the effects of which he had said so much, he might possibly have been intelligible: but he talked so much of the consequences of the system, and so little of the system itself, that it was impossible to know what system he alluded to. It was however injurious to that union of great families, as he had called opposition, to insinuate that they opposed the system they had suggested; and if the gentlemen to whom that expression obviously pointed were present, the right honourable baronet's speech would no doubt meet proper animadversion. If the system he had talked of was that by which the present administration acted, it was not the fact that it had originated with opposition. The right honourable baronet knew that he himself had opposed government in that system, in concert with opposition. [Sir Henry cried no! no!] If the right honourable baronet means that his opposition was nothing to Government, he was right; but certainly he had voted with the opposition. But the right honourable baronet's speech was inconsistent; he had spoken of the peasantry as in the most deplorable situation; while he asserted that the country was in a state of flourishing prosperity: as if he meant to separate between the prosperity of the country and of its inhabitants, which in his mind must be inseparably united. He had said, too, that the hearth-tax was not among the causes of the peasant's wretched-

nels; but that the landlord, the resident landlord, was alone in fault. This opinion could result from nothing but a perfect ignorance of the state of the country; it was unfounded and false: some blame may possibly be due to the landlord; and much to tythes; but the right honourable baronet would find it impossible to justify the assertion, that the wretchedness of the Irish peasant was due to the resident landlord.

He then made some observations on what had fallen from the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his reply, and repeated his charge of extravagance under several of the different heads; professing that it was not so much the mere extravagance of ministers he blamed as their corruption; the one was only an effect of the other. He concluded by solemnly protesting against the exorbitance of the establishments.

Sir HENRY CAVENDISH rose in reply; vindicated himself from the charge of ignorance of the state of the country, and repeated his assertion, that many of the gentlemen in opposition had formerly supported the system they now oppose: he could not however charge the right honourable gentleman with this; for his principle was universal opposition to every system, and every administration.

This called up Mr. GRATTAN again. He said he had supported better administrations than the right honourable baronet had supported; but then he had not, like the right honourable baronet, both supported and opposed one and the same administration, and the same measures. There the right honourable baronet had the advantage of him.

Mr. CAVENDISH BRADSHAW rose to order; he said, though he was a young member of that House, he had been used to the society of gentlemen, and had always found that the less this kind of personal colloquy was encouraged, the better; and called on the Chairman for his opinion: who said that there was no particular question before the committee, but that in a committee of supply gentlemen were permitted to speak at large to the state of the country, finance, &c.

Mr. GRATTAN expressed his sorrow for the error the honourable member had fallen into. Had he consulted his right honourable relative, who was a perfect adept in the rules and orders of parliament, he would have told him that in a committee of supply, or indeed in any committee, it was perfectly orderly to reply to every thing either personal or argumentative that might be advanced: he would also have told him that the most decent and orderly conduct for a young man, who knew nothing about order, was to hold his tongue.

Mr. VANDELEUR said, that when he heard the Chancellor of the Exchequer state, that there was a surplus of income above expence, he fancied that the Government here would comply with that of England in endeavouring to gratify the feelings of his majesty, by relieving the peasantry of this country from the oppression of the hearth-tax. He could not conceive that any man would assert, that 2 shillings was not more oppressive to the wretched peasants of Ireland, than 3 shillings to the opulent and industrious Englishman. But as this question would be the subject of future discussion, he would defer saying any thing more on it; but submit some observations on what had fallen from the Chancellor of the Exchequer. That when the Chancellor had stated that the king's letters were encreased above the ordinary rate, by sums paid on account of the addressees of that House, he should have compared the grants made on that account, with those made in the year 1786, when the establishments were formed according to the encreased income; and if any encrease of expence appeared above what was then charged, he might fairly state the excess and additional charge on Government. That when he stated the expences incurred by vote of the House, he should not have omitted 20,000*l.* for forage, when only 7000*l.* was charged in the estimate of 1786; an encrease of 13,000*l.* on that article.

That the charge of encrease of bounties made by the Chancellor, was not warranted; as the encrease of hereditary revenue, on which that and the expence of management was charged, had encreased almost in an equal proportion to that: whilst the ordinary revenue afforded to Government a clear encrease of 205,000*l.* arising from the additional duties above that of 1785, when the new taxes were granted.

That in the income for the next year, there appeared 30,000*l.* advanced from the bank, as part of 60,000*l.* to be paid by the company for a renewal of their charter. That in all financial contracts confidence must be reposed in Government, but they are responsible to the House for the propriety of the measure; and that this bargain with the bank appears impolitic, injudicious, and improvident. That ministry instead of following the constant practice of England, in reducing on every renewal of the charter of the bank, the interest which was paid to it from 8 to 6, to 4 and to 3 per cent. had taken a specific sum of money, by which means a fallacious appearance was held out to the House, by swelling the year's income. That even if this money had been applied to redeem treasury bills, the most advantageous way it could be employed, and which was not the case, it would only reduce the interest of the national debt 2200*l.* That the advantage the proprietors derived from the incorporation was so evident that Government could be under no apprehension, they would not have accepted almost any terms offered to them, as they

had subscribed at 88 what now sold for 154. That if ministry had therefore adopted the plan of encreasing the sinking fund, by reducing the annuity they might have reduced the 4 per cent. to 3 and half, by which 3000l. would have been saved on the old capital; and if the 400,000l. encreased capital had been subscribed in the 3 and half per cent, at 3 per cent, the nation would have saved 2000l. per annum: and the subscribers purchasing at 90, would have had 3l. 6s. per cent. for their subscription; and the sinking fund would have been encreased by this whole operation, 5000l. a year.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER then moved,
Resolved, That is the opinion of this committee, that the debt of the nation was 2,331,609l. 18s. 2d. at Lady-day 1791.

That the nation is liable to the payment of life annuities, to the amount of 400,000l.

That the nation is also liable to the payment of several similar annuities, to the amount of 300,000l.

That a supply be granted to his majesty to defray these and other expences up to the 25th of March, 1793.

That 1000 men additional, with non-commissioned officers, will be necessary to the defence of the kingdom.

That in order to enable his majesty to carry his gracious and determined resolution, as expressed in a message to the House of Commons, delivered by Lord Viscount Townsend, of keeping the kingdom in a proper state of defence, that in addition, to the 12,000 men on the military establishment, it shall be augmented so as to make it amount in the whole to 15,230 men.

That 4000l. be granted to the Right Hon. the Speaker of the House of Commons, in order to enable him to support the rank and dignity of his office.

500l. to the Right Hon. John Monck Mason, chairman of the committee of supply, for his services during the present session.

540l. to Robert Thoroton, Esq. clerk of the house.

340l. to Edward Tresham, Esq. assistant clerk.

320l. to James Corry, Esq. clerk of the journals.

240l. to Dawson Ellis, clerk of the engrossments.

500l. to Frederick Winstanly, and his assistant.

607l. to the Serjeant at Arms.

70l. to Lorenzo Senfi, deliverer of the votes.

200l. to Henry Holmes and Edward M'Cowen, door-keepers.

350l. to Thomas Lefrange, deputy serjeant at arms.

700l. to the Right Hon. the Speaker, to be by him distributed amongst the back door-keepers, being twenty in number.

200l. to Robert Thoroton, for his extraordinary care and trouble and expence, in preparing copies for the 28th volume of the journals.

112l. to James and Abraham Bradley King, for printing the accounts laid before the House this session.

700*l.* to the Right Hon. the Speaker, to be by him distributed amongst the committee clerks.

200*l.* to James Corry, Esq; for his extraordinary care in superintending the printing of the new schedule of duties

300*l.* to Thomas Burgh, Esq. accompanant general.

800*l.* to J. Tydd, Esq. paymaster of corn-premiums.

200*l.* to the Right Hon. Lord Annaly, examiner of customs.

240*l.* to Anthony Ferguson, Esq. assistant examiner.

70*l.* to Jerry Smith, deputy paymaster of corn-premiums.

130*l.* to Samuel Smart.

220*l.* to Paul Le Bas, examiner of corn-premiums.

140*l.* to John Swan, Esq. examiner of excise.

2000*l.* to the Trustees of the Linen Manufacture.

2000*l.* to the same Trustees, for other purposes.

12200*l.* to the Incorporated Society for Protestant Charter-schools.

10,000*l.* to the Foundling Hospital.

8100*l.* to the House of Industry.

1100*l.* to the Hibernian School.

1000*l.* to the Marine-School.

5000*l.* to the Board of First Fruits.

5000*l.* to the Dublin Society.

1559*l.* to James and Abraham Bradley King, for 500 copies of the eighth volume of the journals.

80*l.* to Mrs. Molloy, house keeper, for coals and candles.

10,350*l.* to the Trustees of the Linen Board.

500*l.* to the Corporation of Paving.

2560*l.* to the Governors of St. Patrick's Hospital, to pay a debt contracted by the institution, and to enable them to receive the lunatics accommodated at present in the House of Industry.

Resolved, That it is the opinion of this committee, that the supply to be granted to his Majesty, be a sum not exceeding 2,099,173*l.*

That a further supply be granted to his Majesty towards paying off the Life Annuities, &c.

That the said supply be a sum not exceeding 77,139*l.*

All which being severally agreed to,

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER then moved, that the Chairman report progress, and request leave to sit again.

Carried in the affirmative.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY, 7, 1792.

Mr. SECRETARY HOBART read in his place his Majesty's answer to the address of this House as follows:

" His Majesty receives very graciously the dutiful and loyal address of the House of Commons of Ireland, and thanks them for their affectionate professions of attachment to his person, family and government.

" His Majesty is well pleased that the progress of the negotiations between Russia and the Porte, and the prospect of general tranquillity are satisfactory to his faithful Commons, and also that they participate in the gratification which he feels on the marriage of his son the Duke of York with the Princess Royal of Prussia.

" He is sensible to the zeal which they continue to manifest for the support of his Government, by their assurances of granting him the necessary supplies, and is truly happy that the flourishing state of the commerce and manufactures of Ireland keeps pace with the unabating endeavours for her welfare.

" It is a further satisfaction to his Majesty that the impressions which directed his choice of the Earl of Westmorland are confirmed by their wishes for his continuance in the government of that kingdom.

" G. R."

The answer being read from the chair, it was ordered that his Majesty's answer be entered on the journals of the House.

Mr. SECRETARY HOBART then moved, that an address of thanks be presented to his Majesty for his gracious answer to the address of this House; which was agreed to.

Mr. COOKE moved for leave to bring in a bill to prevent mutiny and desertion.—Leave given.

The Right Hon. Mr. MASON brought up the report from the committee of supply; which was read and agreed to by the House.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER moved that this House do, on to-morrow, resolve itself into a committee of ways and means; which was agreed to.

Ordered on the motion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that the report of the committee of supply be referred to the committee of ways and means.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 1792.

Mr. GRATTAN asked, whether the power of putting strangers into the gallery proceeded from the Speaker or from the House his idea was that the Speaker was the servant of the House, and possessed no superiority. At some future day he should bring forward a motion in order to take the sense of the House upon it.

The **SPEAKER** said, I feel myself called upon to explain my conduct relative to the gallery of the House. There was a standing order of the House which precluded strangers from admission, and which obliged the serjeant at arms to take them into custody, if found within the house or gallery. We have been however in the habit of relaxing it, I have relaxed it, perhaps, too far, and I am responsible if I go beyond those boundaries which secure order and decorum. Therefore I say, that the relaxations have proceeded from me, and not from the House. I gave directions to the serjeant at arms and the door-keepers, that each member should admit two, at the suggestion of a number of gentlemen. This, as the House consists of 300 members, could put into the gallery 600 persons, which number it was unequal to hold. My wish was in this regulation, however, that all the members should have an equal privilege. I do not think it a subject proper for discussion; but will be happy in complying with any suggestion that should be made by the House.

Mr. **GRATTAN** persevered in his intention of bringing forward at a future time a motion which would determine on the powers possessed by the Speaker, and on the privileges possessed by the House. Order he thought ought to be preserved in every popular assembly, without any extraordinary exertion of power. He should be the last to introduce any person capable of disturbing a debate. The privileges formerly exercised by the members he was of opinion ought not to be given up.

The **CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER** declared, that no member could possess a privilege contrary to the standing orders of the House. If the standing order which precluded strangers from the House was then repealed, there indeed the matter might lie open for discussion. But, consistent with the rule of parliament, a motion, contrary to a standing order, could not be debated. It was the duty of the Speaker to enforce order in every department of the House, and he had done so. His proper conduct on all occasions should give weight to his regulations. But in the present instance he had only acted agreeably to his duty, and was possessed of no discretionary power whatever.

Sir **HENRY CAVENDISH** said, I have heard this point debated twenty times in parliament. I will say, that on this occasion the Speaker possesses no power—the member no privilege. The standing order supposed that there was no stranger in the House. If any member noticed a stranger in the gallery, the serjeant at arms was obliged to turn him out or to take him into custody. The duty of the Speaker was to preserve order and decency, which he had uniformly done. And, for my part, I shall always vote for an order which we and our ancestors for centuries have found to be efficacious and salutary.

Mr. GRATTAN repeated that he would bring the matter forward at a future day.

The SPEAKER on this observed, that if any member had any thing to remark relative to his conduct, he hoped that he would do it now. If no resolution should be come to by the House on the occasion, he should contrive their silence into an approbation of his conduct.

[Here there seemed a general concurrence of the House in approbation of the Speaker's regulations.]

The House resolved into a committee of ways and means, Mr. Mason in the chair.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER rose to state the new duty on sugar.—He said when the equalization of duties was first introduced, it became a subject of long and vehement debate;—till after a full discussion, it was fixed at 13s. 4d. one-third, on raw;—and 1l. 16s. 2d. on refined sugar:—in that proportion it had since continued to the general satisfaction; and in the duty he was now to propose, in order to equalize with England,

He proposed an addition of 2s. 10d. on raw, and
7s. 11d. on refined,

By which means the duty	}	ol. 16s. 2d.
payable on an hundred of		
raw sugar would be		
On refined,	—	2l. 4s. 8hd.

This, said he, I trust goes to the wish of every gentleman; I know it goes to the wish of every merchant that I have consulted.

The only other matters of difference from former years, were a tax of one shilling on the license for retailing cider, ale or wine.

On the admission of attornies an additional tax of 3l. and the same upon the admission of the solicitors into chancery.

A deposit of 500l. by lottery office-keepers, on taking out licence. The object was to prevent insurance. When the policies were stamped it was defeated. When 1000l. deposit were required, they refused to comply with the condition. Prohibition, indeed, he thought not the proper mode for correcting the evil. The lottery office-keepers, however, had agreed to lodge the sum of 500l. The produce to the revenue, as their license was to be doubled, would be 1000l. at 200l. each. The produce to revenue by insurance was 1800l. Yet he considered the loss of revenue no object, when put in competition with the correction of a national complaint.

He then moved the necessary resolutions to found the sugar bill.

Also the resolutions for the Post Office and Stamp bills; after which the committee adjourned.

House resumed. Mr. MASON reported progress, and obtained leave to sit again to-morrow.

The Right Hon. JOHN O'NEIL presented a petition, which he said had been put into his hands by a very respectable body of men at Belfast; it was signed by more than six hundred, many of whom he knew personally to be persons of great reputation; the object of the petition was that the legislature would please to repeal all penal and restrictive laws against Roman Catholics, and put them on the same footing with their Protestant fellow-subjects.

Right Hon. Sir HENRY CAVENDISH requested the right honourable gentleman to read the petition throughout. He trusted it was not in any wise similar to a petition brought into the House a few nights ago (by Mr. O'Hara) if it was, he was sure it must be unknown to the right honourable gentleman who moved for its being received; as the right honourable gentleman valued too highly his own dignity, and the dignity of Parliament to present such a petition.

Mr. O'NEIL read the petition throughout: It begins with lamenting the degraded state of the Roman Catholics, and requested they may have redress as above stated.

The Hon. DENIS BROWNE seconded the motion for receiving the petition; it was from persons of known character, and the House should have received the other alluded to by the right honourable baronet. [The House very loudly, no! no! no!] The *no* may interrupt me, but it does not convince; I am not willing to reject the petitions of the people. I do not forget what effect the rejection of American petitions had.

Sir HERCULES LANGRISHE said, he was sorry to find it of late so frequently necessary to recall the attention of gentlemen to a strict observance of the orders of parliament. That they were institutions of great wisdom, and if we were to suffer a neglect of them to grow on our proceedings, we should soon lose both our dignity and authority; that he considered the honourable member's (Hon. D. Browne) doctrine about the reception of petitions not exactly conformable to the order of parliament; that when any member presents a petition, it is his duty, (let it be subscribed by any person or persons however respectable) to state the substance and prayer of it, or to read it in his place, if required by any member; and for this reason, when the petition is presented, the Speaker puts the question, whether it shall be received; that the only materials the House had whereby to decide their vote

on that question, were, the representation of the contents as stated by the member.—That the right of petitioning was too valuable not to be strictly ascertained and precisely known.—That the lowest member of the community was entitled to it, in his individual capacity; and as to collective capacities, they belonged only to corporate bodies, such as we can trace in our charters, or read in our statute book, not to combinations and societies, self-created and self-incorporated. That however, the present petition was signed by individuals, inhabitants of Belfast, and as such, he could have no objection to its being received; as to the contents, it was far from his mind to impute to the gentlemen who signed it, any other motive than they professed, or any purpose but the public good. He however could not avoid making some observations on the novelty of the connexion, and the singularity of one class of men interceding in favour of another; and he observed, whatever favourable intentions might be entertained by the petitioners towards their Catholic brethren, yet, for his part, if it was his wish to obstruct the progress of every favour to the Roman Catholics, now depending before parliament; if it was his wish to stop the growth of that conciliation and affection that were rising in our breast; if it was his wish to revive the prejudices that have so long kept us asunder, he would go to Belfast and sign this petition.—That the Roman Catholics, no more than any other persons in the universe, can be supposed so absurd as to entertain a wish for the continuance of any restrictions that may affect them, nor did they ever utter so suspicious a sentiment; yet they know too well what is due to the authority of the state to dictate to the wisdom of Parliament. “They wish for a further repeal of the laws for affecting them, but grateful for former concessions, they do not presume to point out the measure or extent to which such repeal should be carried, but confide in your liberality and benevolence, that it will be as extensive as you shall think prudent and expedient:”—This is the language of the constitution, which he hoped would recommend them to the favour of parliament—would they come dictating to parliament, “We are the greater number, give us every privilege you possess?” No, Sir, they would not presume to do it. No; they hope you will carry your liberality so far as the prosperity of the country will admit; but it is their suspicious friends who desire you to surrender the Protestant Ascendancy. I shall not object to this petition being received from so respectable a member of this House; but I have seen some treasonable productions from the same town that merit the severest punishment.

Sir BOYLE ROCHE. Mr. Speaker, I have many objections to receiving the petition before us, and, with the leave of the House, I will state them.

It is evident that it is an airy fabric raised upon a sandy foundation, and has for its base fraud and deceit—as it means the very reverse of what it professes. It brings to my recollection a Latin passage, which in my mind is very suitable to it—*Timeo Danaos & dona ferentes*.

I remember, Sir, that in the year 1778, when the first bill for the relief of the Roman Catholics came before this House, that the subscribers to the present petition instructed their representatives to oppose them in all cases. But when the business came on, and they found that the old Protestant families were determined to support the suffering part of the people, they changed their ground (as they saw they could not oppose with effect) and had immediate recourse to stratagem, by endeavouring in every way in their power to debauch the lower order of the Catholics settled amongst them. For this purpose they went to mass with them, built chapels for them, and mixed with them through every part of the kingdom, for the mere purpose of corrupting them. The first meeting held at Dungannon was upon that ground, as well as the next held in Dublin in 1783—meetings disgraceful to this country. At that critical period, it is very well known that your petitioners gave every aid and support possible to the colonies then in rebellion against their mother country; and if fame tells truth, had entered into a solemn engagement with them to raise disturbances here to favour that enterprise. And I sincerely congratulate the inhabitants of Ireland on having escaped their machinations; and at the same time I declare for myself that I will support the present establishment with my voice in this House, and with the strength of my arm out of it—if it should be necessary.

Now the question is, whether we will receive the insidious petition of a turbulent, disorderly set of people, whom no King can govern, or no God can please—or whether we shall treat it with its merited contempt? For my part, I call upon you to dispose of it as it deserves, by tossing it over the bar, and kicking it into the lobby; and I am determined to divide the House upon it, even if I should stand alone in so just cause.

Right Hon. JOHN O'NEIL. At the same time that I present the petition, I do not hold myself bound to support or oppose its principle. I was called upon, as I have said, by a number of persons, many of them my electors: I was not at this meeting; but I consider it as the right of the subject to petition. I have never declared my opinion on the subject to any man—I will reserve to myself the right of forming my opinion after full deliberation; and when I have formed the best opinion, I can, I will declare it to the House.

I am extremely thankful for the kind and honourable expressions that gentlemen have been pleased to use towards me; but I assure them, I did not rely upon any favourable reception through

their personal regards for me—I took up the petition merely as a point of duty.

The question was put that the petition be received, and carried with Sir Boyle Roche's single negative.

EAST INDIA TRADE.

Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY. I never in my life rose in this House under more embarrassment than at this moment. I am much exhausted with personal exertion in another place; and besides, I have observed since the beginning of this session, such a coldness, such a degree of languor in the House, as makes me despair of being able to raise them to that warmth, that zeal for their country's welfare, which only can impel them to vigorous exertions: that warmth, which can make them capable of receiving the impression of duty to their country; that zeal for its interests which will induce them to listen to the claims of the people.

When Ireland asserted her right of trading with the whole world, there was no reservation made with regard to India. We might have proceeded immediately to those wealthy regions, had we not by our revenue act restrained ourselves: but now that we see more clearly the value of the trade we have relinquished, what prevents our exercising our right? What has happened in this year 1792, to depress the spirits of this House, to cast that gloom upon us that is so obvious? I hope it does not arise from any suspicion entertained by the Government of this or the sister country: I hope the members of this House are as capable of feeling and of asserting their rights as ever they were; but I wish to see the House alive and animated, and eager for discussion—and that they were determined that discussion should be for the advantage of the people, and their own honour.

Last year we did endeavour to draw the attention of the House to this object; we stated the importance of the East India commerce—perhaps below the truth; we stated the probable advantages this country would derive from it; we stated the jealous anxiety with which all commercial nations, from the earliest times, have endeavoured to participate in this trade: but we did not, neither could we state the value of the trade itself; however, we are now, by the returns on your table, enabled to state the sums paid by this country for East India goods, which in the last eighteen months amount to near half a million sterling. [Mr. Ponsonby specified the various articles.] Yet this return is but guess work; for so little regard has been had to this trade, that the officer had not classed it under any one particular head, but extracted the various articles from various accounts; yet what I have stated is the least sum that Ireland pays to England for India goods, besides any contraband trade she may have with the subjects of European states.

I am surprized the House should seem so listless and so inattentive to this business. I was told upon a former occasion, that this country could not carry on an India trade for want of capital, and in the same breath I was told, if she exerted her right to trade to India, it would injure England: I tried to reconcile those two opposite declarations, but found it impossible.

Again, I was told that the prosperity of England depended on the revenue she drew from India; but the conduct of the British minister has flatly given the lie to the assertion: for the minister of England is now carrying on a most expensive war that absorbs the whole revenue of India; and yet he is able to come forward in parliament and remit 400,000*l.* taxes to the people of England.

This year, the reasons for asserting our rights are stronger than they were last; inasmuch, as this year the minister must settle his bargain with the East India Company, which, if he is permitted to do without any claim being made on the part of Ireland, we tacitly renounce our rights, and he will be enabled to tell the company, "whatever you have enjoyed, you shall continue still to enjoy—not only the monopoly of India trade, but the monopoly of the trade of Ireland in India goods."

Now, what honest reason can be assigned for refusing to make this claim?—Will the commerce of Britain suffer?—No.—Will the wealth of England be diminished?—No:—But if it did;—it is not our consideration.—We represent the people of Ireland, and it is beneath our dignity to consider any interest in preference to theirs.

I do not recollect, that in 1782, any reservation of regulating our trade was made, or any such claim advanced by England;—but I do recollect in 1785, after the propositions were ineffectually taken up by his majesty's ministers, the parliament of England, in their address to the crown, said they did lament "that any jealousy should exist of their encroaching on our rights, which they would be as anxious to guard as their own."—It appears, therefore, that the English parliament does not resist our rights. As to the settlements of England beyond the Cape, I have no more idea of trading to them than to the settlements of Holland and Portugal; but no European can pretend to lay claim to the monopoly of the trade to the independent empire of China, of Japan, and other states, compared with which this country and England are but specks upon the face of the globe.

If this House shall refuse to interfere, I do fear that it may make an impression unfavourable to the character of the House, on the minds of the people. Is there any thing alarming in the state of the kingdom? Have new maxims and new notions been propagated? Have they been favourably received by the people? If they have, they will be more so when the people see a Protestant House of Commons deserting their claims. Government

is instituted for the happiness of mankind, and in all countries where the people are brave and informed, the security of government is in proportion to the happiness of the people. No government was ever subverted by seditious and designing men; but when that government deserted the care of the people's welfare and happiness, and if there be any alarm in the land, it calls upon you with a louder voice than I can, not to desert the people's rights, or lay them prostrate at the feet of the British minister, or the chairman of the East India Company.

England grants the East India Company an exclusive monopoly, and makes the port of London the only place where India goods can be entered. But what right has she (even supposing the monopoly to be admitted by us) to make London the port for Ireland? If you were ever so well disposed to this monopoly, would you not say, "Let London be the port for England, but let Dublin be the port for Ireland? This might be done were the monopoly even to stand—and this could not disoblige England. Who then do you want to oblige? Is it the English minister, to make a merit for him? Is this acting as the representatives of an independent people?—There is no reason for not having an import and export trade from Ireland, whether as a monopoly or an open trade. I am ready to do to England every act of kindness and fellowship, but I am not ready to surrender the rights of Ireland.

Mr. Ponsonby concluded with moving leave "to bring in a bill to repeal every law which prohibits a trade from Ireland to the countries lying eastward of the Cape of Good Hope."

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER. I must adopt a different mode from that of the hon. gentleman, and instead of calling for unusual warmth, I shall call for unusual deliberation, for I never knew unusual warmth arise, that it did not produce unusual inconvenience.

I submit whether this bill be an asserting of our rights or not;—there is no law that I know of, that prevents us from trading beyond the Cape of Good Hope for any article but tea, and that article by your own revenue law, is directed to be had through the medium of England. If this be fact, the matter of right is already ascertained in our favour, and the question is narrowed to a mere question of commerce and expediency.

The first statement of the hon. gentleman was, that we had argued that we could not carry on the India trade, not having capital, and that if we did carry it on, we would injure England. I do not know who it was that argued thus; but sure I am they argued justly, for by an impotent attempt to carry on this trade without sufficient capital, we might do ourselves no actual good, but do England much positive harm; the truth is, that every country that ever attempted this trade has failed or is declining.

Nothing but the territorial revenue by which England makes her investments homeward, could support the enormous expence of this trade. What are the exports of England? commodities we do not possess, silver, tin, copper, woollen-cloth; and yet not possessing these, we are to go to India, and against all advantages England possesses, beat her out of the market. England has another and a very considerable advantage which we could not enjoy—a trade to China in various commodities, the growth of the East; amongst these opium and cotton are of principal value; these she exports to China, in aid of the metals with which principally she purchases her tea; and these produce her immediate profit.

Now, Sir, I do not offer these arguments to induce you to relinquish the trade, but as reasons why you should pursue it with less zeal. What you do by your own authority confirms your rights; if the country was to speak in its pride, it would say, “England holds this trade at our pleasure—to us it must look for its continuance.” For, Sir, at this day the world is not so ignorant as not to know, that refraining from that trade is our own concession; and if so, they never can think that any kind of voluntary concession can diminish a right.

It seems to be the opinion of gentlemen, that no concession can be made without relinquishing dignity and independance.—What, Sir, does England relinquish independance and dignity, when she concedes to us the monopoly of her market for our linens, or does she lay herself at our feet?

If I was to say that the Emperor of Germany was a dependant upon England, should I not be guilty of great folly? And yet the Emperor Charles, by treaty with England, relinquished for ever the right of trading beyond the Cape of Good Hope; and what was his motive? A motive that at this day ought to have its weight in this House—to pluck up and to eradicate for ever every root of division and disunion. And surely if the allies of England found it necessary to make such a concession for the reasons assigned, we who are connected with England by blood, by affection and interest; we, the safety of whose constitution in church and state depends upon that connection, will not think it hard to forbear the exercise of a right undenied, undoubted by any man; but which, if exercised, might do us little good, but our best and dearest friend very great harm. England certainly is our best friend, and the connection we have with her will support the constitution of this country against every clamorous incendiary that would attempt to shake it.

England is not only our best friend politically, but she is our best friend commercially; her markets are the best markets for the produce of our agriculture and manufacture: The balance of trade, which is so much in our favour, demonstrates this. Why

then should we enter upon fruitless projects to injure England and favour her rivals?

It is an argument much relied on, that the East-India Company are about to advance a sum of money for the renewal of their charter, and we are advised to claim a share in the spoil. But if the company should not be able to do this, how are we to act? The company owes seven millions sterling; the company is now carrying on an expensive war: how then can they pay this expected sum of money? The probability is, that the burden will be thrown upon the English nation, and I do not think those gentlemen very much our friends, who advise us to go share in a loss.

Sir, I have already stated my reasons for thinking that no country can carry on this East India trade in competition with England. I know it may be urged that the Danes did carry it on for a time, and successfully: but let it be recollected, that was in time of war, when the company's servants wished to send home their fortunes to Europe. These they invested in goods which were put on board Danish vessels, taking bills at a long date on Europe for the amount: the Danes carried those goods to China; there bought teas, carried them to Europe, sold them for cash, and by the time their bills came due were in a condition to pay them: but as soon as this business was discovered, it was stopped by the company, who found another way for their servants to remit their property to Europe; and ever since the Danish company has declined.

It was also said that America had established a trade to India: I understand that trade has failed, or is much declining.—The truth is, that the inhabitants of India will not receive the productions of manufactures brought to them by strangers;—their prejudice—their religion is against it.

In acting as we have done, we do no more than England does for Portugal, when she concedes a decided preference for the wines of that country; or than Portugal does when she concedes a decided preference for the manufactures of Ireland. If England should, in her conduct towards us, treat us unjustly, we have the remedy in our hands; but England is too wise and too honest a nation for us to fear such conduct. They know that if one of these kingdoms is enslaved, the other will not long remain free. When England gave our linens a decided preference, she did not think her rights were injured; when she gave our corn a decided preference, she did not think she surrendered a right. Let us meet her then with an emulation of liberality, an emulation of friendship that will strengthen the right of both.

The Hon. Mr. STEWART said, a motion was brought forward in the last session of parliament, by my hon. friend, on this subject; the object of that motion was enquiry—I wished for in-

formation on a subject so important, and therefore gave it my concurrence. The House thought fit to negative the motion. I imagine the present will not have better success, thinking it impossible that the House could proceed to repeal what they so lately refused to enquire into.

In the course of the former debate I expressed my doubts of the propriety of repealing the clauses in question. Reflection has by no means dispelled those doubts, and I am now less inclined to withdraw the monopoly from England than when the subject was last agitated.

I considered it then, as I do now, ridiculous to argue that Ireland was unsuited to the trade; or that the trade was in its nature pernicious to the country carrying it on. To say that Ireland had not capital to engage in it, was little to the purpose. If Ireland had demand for Asiatic articles, if the commerce was permitted, foreign capital ever ready to fly where profit can be made, would flow in, and the trade would be profitable as surely as individuals could undersell monopolizers in competition. It was her fitness for the trade, it was my conviction that British capital would avail itself of Irish rights to wound Britain herself, that determines me to forgo one advantage rather than be guilty of ingratitude. I never will suffer the rights of Ireland to seduce and drain from Britain that vital principle which upheld her greatness, and enabled her to support her burthens. Nor will I ever lend the rights of Ireland to British merchants as a cloak for fraud and injustice.

Ireland was rapidly advancing in riches. Her commerce was extending itself every day, and thriving under the wings of the British navy. The friendship of Ireland as a nation was too important, to make the reflection in the least degrading, that her prosperity as a country depended on her connection with England. The fate of Britain was little less involved in her's. Great Britain was at present struggling against a debt incurred in defence of colonies, the advantages of which this country shared. Her navy was an expence of two millions annually, which watched equally over the Irish as the British flag. When the value of the protection received was compared with what Ireland directly contributed to the support of the empire, an inference almost followed, impeaching her of ingratitude.

The clauses which my honourable friend wished to repeal, rescued Ireland from the imputation. I consider it as a tribute of affection, equal in amount to the excess of the price paid the India company for the teas consumed in Ireland, above what it could be imported for in Irish ships from China. I consider it as a contribution to the empire, applied, in the most efficacious manner, as going immediately to the support of a chartered company to whom Britain had entrusted the government of her vast empire in the East. This chartered company was at present in debt, engaged

in an important and as yet an undecided war, against one of the most formidable opponents of the British interest in India: upon its success the fate of those possessions depended. Was this the moment to withdraw assistance, to add to their embarrassments, or to weaken their exertions? The article of tea was one of their principal sources of profit. If Ireland withdrew her consumption, it would increase their difficulties; it might drive them to bankruptcy; discharge their debt upon Great Britain; wound the credit of a country in which that of Ireland was involved; and compel England, however inconsistent it might be with her policy, to assume the territorial revenue and civil government of that empire, rather than let it perish in the hands of distressed merchants.

When I consider the two islands, distant only a few leagues from each other; the one importing East-Indian produce, by means of a monopoly; the other by individual merchants; it was evident that where the monopoly did not exist, there the articles would be cheapest. That the nation rejecting the monopoly, adopted a policy not merely defensive, but offensive; it was in vain to imagine that the importation would be confined to the consumption of Ireland. Ireland to her disgrace would be made an emporium for English capital to smuggle tea into Great Britain: it might be said it was her business to guard against that. I disapprove the answer as unkind, determined never to act by the idea, that either the commercial or political prosperity of Ireland could be distinct or opposed to that of Britain.

I cannot however approve of the mode in which Ireland at present receives the tea she consumes. The charter of the India company was on the point of expiring, I hope it may be renewed on other and better principles, but on this part of the subject I speak with great diffidence from my ignorance of commerce. At present all the produce of the East was imported directly into the port of London; from whence it circulated and was consumed, charged with the expence of carriage to the most remote parts of the empire; it requires, in my opinion, some strong collateral reason to justify this circuitous mode of receiving the commodity—the India company were not benefited by it—none of the increased expence went into their pockets; on the contrary, it wounded their interest—it raised the price to the consumer. The increase of price decreased consumption, and decrease of consumption decreased their profit. It did not tend to prevent smuggling in preference to other arrangements; the same precautions which conduct the India ships to the custom-house of London, would conduct them to his majesty's officers in the out-ports, were the trade distributed amongst the principal harbours in the empire: it would also save many of their ships a dangerous navigation, which has proved fatal to several. I am aware of the opposition any arrangement would meet from the board of directors, which might tend to diminish their patronage in the port of London;

but I know that the minister of England had abilities and fortitude to struggle against the private views of particular classes of men, when by doing so he could serve the empire at large.

Let the company upon the renewal of their charter, be bound to settle a portion of their trade equivalent to the consumption of this country, in one, two, or three of the principal harbours. Let them have agents and stores here; let them fit out their ships with Irish commodities, Irish sailors, and Irish provisions. Then the subjects of Ireland would stand precisely on the same footing as the unchartered subjects of Great Britain. They would consume the commodity as cheap, relieved from the expence of re-exportation; the country would receive the benefit of that capital circulating in it; individuals might become proprietors by purchasing stock, and Ireland would mark her attachment to Great Britain by yielding to the principle of monopoly as long as it was her policy to continue it. The India company could not suffer from the arrangement, as their profits would encrease with the increased consumption; the metropolis of England, grown infinitely too unwieldy from the national debt and its vast commerce, would be relieved by it; circulation would be propelled to the extremities of the empire only to return to the heart with increased vigour. The trifling revenue which Britain might lose by parting with the duty not drawn back upon the re-export of the article, Ireland would not hesitate to repay. As long as the policy of England was liberal, I am convinced an Irish parliament would ever be generous.

I shall conclude by saying, that prejudiced as I must ever feel in favour of any motion brought forward by my hon. friend, I cannot vote with him on the present occasion; for I am decidedly of opinion that the contribution should not be withdrawn unless an equivalent was given; and my mind cannot suggest an equivalent, which with so little national impoverishment to Ireland, advantaged Great Britain so much. I am also inclined to think, Irish capital had at present channels enough in which to employ itself, where the returns were more frequent, and I consider the monopoly as a tax not oppressive in its nature, falling altogether on the wealthy, and not in the least wounding the poor; but were even my mind less made up than it was upon what should be the conduct of Ireland towards Great Britain on the present subject, generosity would lead me to choose another moment for abandoning the company than when the British empire in the East was at stake.

Mr. Moore said, notwithstanding the professions of the hon. gentleman that he would bring forward something new on the subject of the India trade, or at least place his arguments in a new point of light, I have not been able to discover any difference between the gentleman's speech of the present and of the last session; the ground was precisely the same; the arguments had not

even the merit of novelty to recommend them; and yet the House was called upon to correct its own work, without having been shewn that that work was erroneous.

If every member in the House had not been previously well convinced of the right of Ireland to trade wherever she thought fit, no one would ever be able to discover it from the speech of the hon. member; but no man denies the right—the question of expedience is the only question before the House; and before we embark in this trade, we should consider whether it is likely to be advantageous or not—I am not one who will say that Ireland is incapable of pursuing this trade to advantage—or that if at present it may not be perfectly convenient, the day may not soon arrive when it will be advantageous; but I will say, we have it always in our power, whenever it does become expedient, for the right is not denied by any man; and the growing prosperity of this country is such, that the time of engaging in distant and extensive commerce approaches rapidly: but the more strongly we adhere to Great Britain, the more we accelerate our own prosperity; every motion that can alarm or irritate either country against the other, should be carefully avoided by the true friends of both.

To provoke and exasperate the two nations by experiments, or encreasing the warmth of their tempers, is no mode of mine; it may entertain, nay, it may astonish the lookers on, but it is a trick too dangerous for my amusement.

I am against this motion, because it engages us beyond our present strength; because, at this time it may create misunderstanding between the two nations; and because it is unnecessary to assert a right which no man denies.

Sir BOYLE ROCHE spoke against the motion.

Mr. VANDELEUR said, that he lamented the friends of the bill had lost the assistance which they would have derived from the talents of an hon. gent. who had declared, his opposition to it arose from an apprehension of its creating a misunderstanding between this country and Great Britain.—That he conceived this was not a question of political policy, but merely of commercial regulation. The best precedent to direct and conduct this and every other commercial transaction, was to be found in the proceedings of the British parliament last session, when a gentleman, whose extensive and liberal principles reflected credit on his understanding, proposed the corn bill which has been alluded to—the landed interest there took the alarm, the minister nor any man in the British House of Commons ventured to assert the principle supported this night, that the bill should be accepted because advantageous to Ireland. They were faithful to their trust, and acted as honest representatives of the English people, and friends to the

British empire. They enforced that principle which this bill contains. They considered what regulation would most advantage the British farmer, and then they gave to Irish corn in the British market a preference to that of any other country.—That this conduct was now proposed to them to follow. That the navigation act secures an advantage to the British over every foreign merchant; but by the revenue bill he was even given a preference over the Irish merchant in the Irish market.

But it has been asserted that this trade cannot be carried on except by an exclusive company—Ministers always desire to circumscribe trade within the limits of their own commercial understandings. It was an old and favourite opinion of the 16th century, that no trade could be carried on unless by exclusive companies:—the Turkey, African, East land, and Russian, as well as the East India trade, were carried on by companies. The East India trade would long since have had a similar fate with the others, if the affairs of that company had not been so involved in those of the state, that no minister dared to attempt it; but that in the 18th century I should have thought the luminous reason of Doctor Smith would have so far dispelled those prejudices that I should not have heard them repeated. The India trade was entered into at Ostend about ten years ago by some Dutch merchants whom the disturbances in Holland had driven from their country; they, with some British merchants, have ever since carried it on with such success, that this year seventeen ships sailed from Ostend to India—This fact is notorious, and must convince every man of the practicability of a free trade.

It is an undoubted political principle, that though a company will carry on a disadvantageous trade, because the directors may have an interest in the abuses of their servants, which may counterbalance the profits they could derive from the trade; yet a free trader, when he has failed in one speculation will not embark in a second. The Ostend merchants have now continued the trade ten years, and must therefore have found it profitable—they even undersell the company in the British market, which they supply with raw cotton, a raw material essentially necessary by the superior fineness of its texture for the muslin manufacture. The exclusion of the subjects of the Emperor by the treaty of Vienna, mentioned by a right hon. bart. bears no analogy to the present question—that treaty was a consequence of long and violent disputes among the contracting powers at the peace of Utrecht, and which had not been terminated at the Congresses held at Cambray and Soissons. The Emperor was compelled by England and Holland to sacrifice the trade to the tranquillity of his subjects; it was the object of a contract to which force made him subscribe. But this is not a question of contract—no external force was apprehended the Methuen treaty is founded on mutual advantages to the contracting powers; but Portugal did not shut its ports to

foreign woollens, as those of France compete with those of England at this day.

I shall conclude with saying, that I should hesitate in giving my vote if I could conceive that the English nation would be so silly as be offended at this country interfering with the trade carried on by India more than by the Turkey company.

Mr. PERY—I will not waste the time of the House by entering into the question of right which was acknowledged on all hands, nor into the advantages that would result from the trade which I believe would be great and many; but I will confine myself to what fell from the hon. gentleman who introduced the motion, and who asked whether we wish to oblige the people of England? I will answer, Yes. We wish to oblige the people of England for the preference they give us in the corn trade—for the monopoly they give us of the linen trade—for the protection which they afford our coast by a fleet to which we contribute not a single shilling, and above all, for that close connection which we enjoy with that people, and which I hope will put to silence faction, turbulence, and sedition.

Hon. DENIS BROWNE said—Is the question narrowed to the expediency of the measure proposed. If the question was on the right of the people of Ireland? I would consider myself the representative of the people of Ireland, and as myself an Irishman, and would assert that right; but the question was merely, whether it was necessary to the commercial or constitutional interest of the country to exercise this right?—I think not.—The trade to China consists of an export of metals, which, though it has been confidently asserted we could procure them from other countries, we had not yet procured; therefore, in my opinion, the country was not in a situation to benefit by the trade to China, nor do I consider that by postponing the exercise of this trade we gave up the right of it—I shall therefore vote against the motion.

Mr. GRAYDON—Sir, I cannot help animadverting on some positions advanced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He has said that this commerce was ruinous to every country that had engaged in it, except Britain. Now I will assert, that so far from being ruinous, it was the most beneficial commerce of all others that this day existed on the face of the globe. I will not, however, rest on assertion, but produce documents. Perhaps the right hon. bart. notwithstanding his high official situation, did not know, that the East India Company had been told by the whole commercial interest of England, that they were ruining the trade of the country by monopolizing the most lucrative branch of it. [Mr. Graydon then read an extract from a report of the committee of English merchants, which contained this opinion.] The India company, Sir, has adopted the position of the right

hon. gentleman, and endeavoured to inculcate it, that the trade to the East was a losing trade. The English merchants, however, were of a different opinion, as appeared by another extract which I shall read from the report of the committee, to this effect—
“ We have not heard of any such ruin, but we have heard that forty-fiveships have lately sailed from America for China, and seventeen from Ostend; and we cannot think that so many mercantile men to unintelligent in their affairs as to undertake so long and expensive a voyage, without strong probability of profit.”

Another position of the right hon. bart. was, that the exports to India were principally in bullion. This, I think, was a position that should be attentively considered, and fully ascertained, for the great benefit that must arise from the India trade, if any, as the export of native manufactures. [He then begged leave to read another document, which was an entry of the exports of the India company on the 14th of January, 1792, and which enumerated a great variety of articles of manufactures.] In some of these I allow Great Britain excels us, and therefore would continue in possession of the India market with respect to these, but in others we are superior to her, and in others, both countries were on a footing of equality. The export in flannels, poplins, light stuffs, linen, and wrought leather, which are among the articles of Eastern commerce, I must think would be highly beneficial to the country.

The Ostend vessels, I grant, are freighted by British capital, a convincing proof of the very advantageous nature of that trade to individuals. If the country was determined to give up this most lucrative commerce to England, at least let it be done with her eyes open; let it be known that we are aware of its value.

Another circumstance to which I would call the attention of the House, is that the British merchants have entered into treaty with the minister, who has told them nearly the terms on which he intended to settle with the India company; one of which was, that the company were still to enjoy the monopoly, with this limitation, that Government should have a power of granting licenses to individuals to engage in the trade. Should this agreement take place, and there could be little doubt but it would, to what a degrading situation will this country then be reduced? To avoid that degrading situation, the measure proposed by the motion was the only means; it shall therefore meet my hearty assent.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER repeated what he had said; that there was no export of manufactures to India, except a few insignificant articles for the use of the company's factories. As to the rest of the hon. gentleman's statement, it consists of hearsay information, against which he would oppose his assertion.

Mr. BROWN (Trin. Coll.) I shall confine myself principally to answering the arguments offered against the bill by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I must observe, that his arguments coincided with those which in general had been offered, viz. that the trade to Asia was impracticable, impolitic, and unfriendly to England. The first objection, again divided itself into assertions, that we had no capital, that we had no materials for export; to which had been added on a former night, that England would seize our ships, and try our mariners at the bar of Westminster-hall. This last rash objection, however, had not been brought forward this night; and when it was in a former session, some gentlemen, even on the Government side of the House, were ashamed of the irritating threat, and reprobated the production of it.

The want of capital was answered by saying the sale of the commodities to be imported was sure, and the profit certain. It was answered also by saying, that capital would flow in from England, and the truth of the answer was acknowledged by Government; and as to manufactures and produce for export it had been fully answered by my honourable friend, (Mr. Graydon) who has shewn that England exported to China much besides bullion, and much of those things which we had, and had in greater perfection.

With respect to the impolicy, I know the merchant, particularly in the North, was desirous of the trade; and I wish ministers would not be so very effectually tender of the merchant, who did not ask their advice, but leave it free to the commercial world to act as they thought fit, and not pretend to protect their interests against their will. It was absurd to suppose they would pursue the trade if they found it pernicious. But let me ask, how this accorded with the objection that it was impracticable? Could an impossible trade be pernicious? I leave it to gentlemen to reconcile these positions. As to the system being unfriendly to England, I find I have, if Government are right, mistaken the meaning of our having acquired a free trade and a constitution. I had not then supposed that it was to be a mere name, and that whenever we wanted to encrease it, we should be told it was impolitic or unfriendly to England. I admit that the two nations were mutually to concede to each other, but I have not understood the concession was to be all on one side, viz. on the side of Ireland; that she was always to surrender her right without getting any thing in return, or being thanked for the surrender.

Let me advert to the silly boast that we have a right to trade to the East if we were never to exercise that right. He could not conceive any thing more childish than a right never to be exercised. It was in fact no right at all, for it was a virtual relinquishment; it was the boast of a child, or of a slave, affecting to put a restraint upon himself which had in fact being previously im-

posed by others. The relinquishments cited by a right hon. gentleman, had nothing in them similar; nor had the preferences given by certain states to others. The relinquishments were compulsory, such as the Emperor's of the East India trade, and the preference given to our linens in England, which was compensated by our almost total dereliction of that woollen trade which might have afforded us a great article of export to India: nor was the Emperor in the instance before alluded to without vast compensation by the treaty of Vienna.

It has been objected, that we should change our monopolists, and to give Sweden and Denmark what we wish to deny to England. This proved in the first place that poor countries can carry on the trade; such are Sweden and Denmark in an eminent degree. And as to the objection, it can easily be obviated in framing the revenue bill, by giving England a preference to them, at the same time that we opened the trade to ourselves; so that any man of common sense may see its futility.

It was said territory and territorial revenue were necessary to this trade, and without those it would be a losing trade to England. Sir Thomas Roe, the first founder of the India trade, thought otherwise; he had prophesied, that if they ever attempted to get territory it would be their ruin. Many gentlemen thought the prophecy was true, and that it would be the ruin of the company, if not the ruin of England: it only became a losing trade, on account of the company's expensive wars, and then they were obliged to try to compensate the loss they occasioned themselves, by new acquisition of territory, for the present repaying them, but leading to new wars and new losses.

He concluded by making a variety of observations on what had fallen from different gentlemen, particularly on the assertion, that the wish for this trade shewed a restless spirit; he said, I never before have heard a restless spirit condemned in commerce; it was its nature to be always in motion, it could not otherwise be in health, and for my part I wish to see it in eternal progression.

Let me add, it has been said, that the American trade to China had failed; I correspond with that country, and often see their public papers; I deny the fact: I assure the House that at this moment India goods were cheaper even in the back settlements of America than in any part of this kingdom; and I must remind the House that in the last session I asserted there had been forty American ships in the river of Canton; I was laughed at for the assertion; it has appeared this night, by the testimony of the first London merchants, produced by Mr. Graydon, that the assertion was true; I therefore hope you will give me more credit now; and, indeed, the Chancellor of the Exchequer seemed to admit the fact.

Mr. O'CONNER. I will not take up the time of the House in arguing this as a constitutional question, or as a matter of contention between this country and Great Britain; but shall confine myself to consider it as a temporary commercial restriction, which if for the interest of Ireland, should be continued, if not it should cease to be re-enacted. To discuss this question fairly, we should consider how the capital of Ireland is at present employed, and by contrasting the advantages which it derives from the ways in which it is now managed, with the benefits we should receive from embarking it in an East-India trade, we shall see the question in its true light. At present, Sir, our capital is employed in agriculture, in manufacture, in our home trade, and in near foreign trades of quick return. Is it from our agriculture the honourable mover would have us withdraw our capital to place it in an East Indian trade? If we did, we should withdraw it from the most lucrative way in which a capital can be engaged: or is it from our manufactures we are to withdraw our capital to place it in an East India trade? If we do, we shall withdraw it from the most profitable employment, next to agriculture, a capital can be engaged in; or indeed can any trade be carried on, unless agriculture and manufactures are made our first object. Is it from our home trade we are to withdraw our capital to place it in a foreign trade, and that the most distant foreign trade? If we do, we shall differ in policy from every wise nation under heaven; for besides many other advantages, in every operation of home trade, each exchange is made between articles the produce of home labour, whereby our industry is doubly excited: whereas no foreign trade goes farther than to exchange articles the produce of home labour, for articles the produce of foreign industry: or are we to withdraw our capital from our near foreign trades of quick return, to place it in a remote circuitous hazardous trade to the East Indies, at a time when our capital is scanty and insufficient? Yet, Sir, these are the only ways in which a capital can possibly be engaged, if you except the carrying trade which is quite out of the question; and I call on the gentlemen at the opposite side of the House, who, session after session have held out such advantages to this country from an East-India trade, to inform us from which of those four branches in which our capital is at present employed, they would recommend to us to withdraw a shilling to place it in that most distant foreign trade to the East-Indies. It is evident that to encrease the wealth of a nation most speedily, you should employ it in the most profitable ways, and it will not be denied by any one who pretends to a knowledge of commercial principles, that agriculture, manufactures, a home trade, and near foreign trades, are infinitely more lucrative ways of employing capital than sending it on that most distant trade to China, which should never be undertaken by any country until it had a superabundance. Is it in her agriculture she has capital to spare?

or in her manufactures? or in her home trade? And is she not surpassed in her near foreign trades of quick return for want of capital by her more wealthy neighbours? Is it therefore she should attempt to rival them in the most distant foreign trade: it is erroneous, preposterous, and I am supported in my assertions, by one of the ablest commercial writers that ever wrote, who after assigning the overflowing of Dutch capital in these most lucrative branches as a good reason for that country engaging in an East India trade, says of Denmark and Sweden what is more applicable to this country. "Better for them," says he, "in their present circumstances to buy India goods from some other nation, even though they should pay somewhat dearer, than to embark their capitals in so very distant a trade, in which the returns are so very slow, in which capital can maintain so small a quantity of productive labour at home, when productive labour is so much wanted, when so little is done, and so much is to do." These, Sir, are the words of a man under whose authority no Government under heaven need be afraid to shelter its acts. An hon. gentleman has said, that Irish merchants are ready to declare their willingness to embark their capitals in an East India trade. If the interest of merchants and the interest of the country they trade from is the same, the intelligence should have weight; but unfortunately they are at variance, and in no case more so than at the present. Nor is the question, whether our merchants are willing to engage in this East India trade; but the question is, whether it is for the interest of Ireland to pursue the trade? But I will suppose an Irish capital embarked in the East India trade; for instance, a sum equal to that which the honourable mover has stated the sum to be now engaged in the purchase of India goods (about 350,000*l.*) and I will ask what fund shall supply its place in paying the wages of the labourers, artisans and manufacturers, until return can be had from India, which cannot be sooner than two or three years? There is no such fund, you can pass no act of parliament that will create money, wherefore the public would go unemployed, by which means you would have your streets crowded with manufacturers, stimulated by want, and made desperate by famine, with no other consolation in their wretchedness and misery than its having been occasioned by a mistake of our patriots.

It has been said, Sir, we can trade to India with English money, in which case it would have to contend with British capital: here would be British merchants against British merchants; on the one hand, they would be destitute of territory in this distant country they would trade to; on the other hand, would possess it with all the advantages of merchants and sovereigns; on the one hand they would have to purchase bullion, furs, and the other articles in demand in China, with Irish manufactures; on the other hand, they would have to purchase them with British

manufactures. Are the Irish as cheap and as good as the British? I am sorry as man can be, to say that the quantity of British goods consumed in this country, gives but too sure a proof of our inferiority; here then is a speculation founded upon disadvantages, founded upon the supposition of ignorance and folly in British merchants.

I ask pardon for having trespassed so long on the time of the House; nor should I have done so, had not this subject been made a leading feature in the charges against the present administration, and that the nation may see what credit should be given to the rest of the catalogue from the insignificance of this, and convinced as I am of the bad consequences which would follow our repealing the clause in question. I have too good an opinion of the abilities of gentlemen at the opposite side of the House to suspect them of agitating it for any speculative advantages it holds out to this country; but notwithstanding its defects, I am far from thinking it disqualified from being a fit subject for popular incitement. There must be wealth in the case, for India is concerned; there must be oppression, for there is restraint.

Sir LAURENCE PARSONS. I should not rise to intrude upon the time of this House at so late an hour, did I not think it would ill become me, who have been in the habit of delivering my sentiments here, to give a silent vote upon such a subject, the first time, I am going to decide upon it. I am not connected with either party: but adhere to what I have always professed, that where I think the Government right it shall have my support; where wrong, my opposition. The present is a subject of much difficulty, and great extent. If, therefore, I err in fact or in inference, I wish to be corrected, and set right. I am not bound to my present opinion, it shall freely give way to superior knowledge, and superior reasoning.

In the year 1779 the free trade was voted. From that time till the year 1791, being a period of twelve years, neither the honourable member, who introduced this subject; nor the right honourable member, who seconded him, and who now states the want of an East India trade as so great a grievance, ever made one motion, or uttered one syllable upon it in this House. If then they were so many years before they could satisfy themselves, that the want of this trade was a grievance, I trust they will not think it extraordinary, if I happen not to be satisfied, that it is so even yet. In the year 1783, in Lord Northington's administration, a motion was made upon this subject by an honourable member, now in office: both these gentlemen were silent. Willing to put the most liberal interpretation upon every man's conduct, I ascribe theirs to a want of conviction at that time of the expediency of this trade; and I only mention it now, that a liberal interpretation may be extended to my conduct upon the pre-

sent occasion. I shall therefore proceed to state simply and briefly the reasons which govern my judgment upon this subject.

Our right to trade to the East being acknowledged, the question is simplified. But the honourable member would wish to confound the right with the exercise, and says, If you have not the exercise what avails the right? And this would be just, if we agreed to an eternal relinquishment of the exercise; but agreeing only to a temporary relinquishment, it is not just. It does not follow that if the trade is inexpedient now, that it will be always inexpedient; or that if we forego for the present the exercise, that we are never to assume it. The infancy of a state is like the infancy of man; what would be a poison to us in our childhood, might be a medicine to us in our maturity. And such I take to be the truth with respect to this trade. For my part, I think the right and the exercise so distinguished, that though I now contend against the exercise, yet I would also contend against a dereliction of the right, to the last drop of blood that flows through my veins.

I shall further simplify the subject, by confining my observations to the trade with China; as I believe, it is admitted that a trade with any other part of Asia is not an object now. The common objection to a trade with China is, that it must be carried on by an export of silver, and would therefore be a subtraction from our capital, which might be better employed at home. To obviate this, it has been stated, that Ireland might export manufactures to Spain, dispose of them there for silver, and afterwards send that silver to China to purchase tea. Now grant that we could do so; and then I say that it would be better to employ that silver at home than send it round the Cape of Good Hope to China: and why? because we have not a capital at home adequate to the opportunities of home employment. The great disadvantage which now retards the growing prosperity of this country, is the smallness of its capital, this every man must admit; consequently, whatever would take from our present capital would be bad; whatever would add to it would be good. If a trade with China would require an export of a part of our capital, which cannot be denied, it would be so far bad. If a trade with Spain would supply us with silver in return for our manufactures, it would add to our capital, and be so far good. But if we were to export that silver again to China to purchase teas, we should lose the benefit at home of that increase of capital. An honourable member has enumerated different articles of manufacture to a considerable amount, which are exported by the East India Company to Asia; but these are almost entirely, for the British settlements there, not for China. The Chinese are too proud or too politic to use any manufactures but their own.

But to put it beyond all doubt that a trade with China cannot be carried on but by an export of silver, not by manufactures, I say, that if we could carry it on by an export of manufactures; England could carry it on so, and to better advantage, because she can undersell us in almost every manufacture. And then I say, that if England could do so, she would—because it would be her interest. Now what is the fact? England exports every year to China from six to seven hundred thousand pounds in silver. What follows? that we could not carry on the trade, but by an export of silver. And what follows undeniably from this? that she could not carry it on, but by an export of silver: that is by a subtraction of our capital here; which ought to be so much better employed at home, in home trade and home manufacture. What trade is best for a nation, that has but a small capital, and great capacity like Ireland? First, I say, that which exports manufacture, and brings back money; that is clear. Next, that which exchanges manufacture for manufacture: but the worst is that, which requires an export of money and a return of manufacture; such is the trade with China.

Again, that is the best trade which gives the quickest return. This no man can deny. What then is the worst? that which gives the slowest return. And what return can be much slower than that which requires a navigation equal to the circumference of the globe. Such is the trade with China. It is not then a trade which exports manufacture and brings back money; nor even a trade which exchanges manufacture for manufacture; nor yet even a trade of expeditious return; but a trade which requires an export of money, and a return of manufacture, and that too the slowest possible return: that is, it is the worst trade for a country circumstanced as this is, that the mind of man can conceive. In confirmation of what I have said, I must mention an author, which I am particularly induced to do, because the honourable member, who introduced this subject, said upon a former occasion, that he considered him as the first political writer of the age. It is Mr. Adam Smith; he is of opinion that it would be better for a country of small capital, “to buy for some time, even at a higher price, from other European nations, the East India goods it had occasion for, than to import them itself directly from the East Indies. What it might lose by the high price of those goods, he says, could seldom be equal to the loss which it would sustain by the destruction of a large portion of its capital from other employments, more necessary, or more useful, or more suitable to its circumstances and situation, than a direct trade to the East Indies.

You have then the opinion of the first political writer of the age, according to the honourable member: and that too upon the subject to which his whole life was dedicated; and that not delivered in the heat of party disputes, to favour one side and annoy the other; but the calm result of his reason, dictated in

his closet. This then I say, is an opinion which ought to have much weight with every man, but especially with the honourable member, who estimates him so eminently. But another idea has been suggested, that if this trade is thrown open, English merchants will employ their capitals in it. Now, this they must do, by one of these two ways; either by emigrating with their capitals here, or by remaining where they are, and employing our merchants here as their factors.—Now, if our merchants are only to carry it on as the factors of English merchants, the main profits of the trade, whatever they may be, must revert to England: little more will be effected than shifting the profits of the trade from the hands of one set of English merchants, that is, the East India Company, to the hands of another set of English merchants, the employers of our factors. The mere factorage would be our only gain, and to countervail even this small gain, we should have, in consequence of India ships unloading here, a multitude of Asiatic manufactures poured in here to the ruin of our own. I say then, that our manufacturers would be in a worse state than they are at present. I say more, that our merchants would not be in a better: for though, according to this idea, our merchants would gain something by the factorage, yet they would have no share in the trade; whereas now they have a share in that part of the trade, which is between London and Dublin, to which the capitals of our merchants are adequate; and you would open the trade between Canton and Dublin, to which the capitals of our merchants are inadequate; and thus give the whole mercantile profits to the English merchants, and give the factorage only to the Irish merchants.

As to the notion of English merchants themselves emigrating to this country, and settling here to carry on this trade; I do not doubt, it has come from such authority, but some English merchants have said it; but I very much doubt, that any English merchant would do it. I know what English manufacturers said upon the propositions, “that if they passed, they would quit their country, and come over with their capitals and settle here.” But I did not credit them: and why? Because there were too many manufacturers at that time sufficiently encouraged to induce them to emigrate, if they were so disposed. Have they from that time to this done so in any instance? Have they, to carry on the cotton manufacture, which is now so flourishing in this country? All the advantages of cheap living, low taxes, low wages, which they then said would induce them to come over with their capitals here, have their operation in the cotton manufacture, they have their full operation in many other manufactures; yet, have they come over in any instance? Do you believe then what they said on the propositions? People of wealth will always be unwilling to emigrate; and if the merchants of England were disposed to emigrate, I have little hope that this

country would be favoured with a preference. It is only speculatists who emigrate; and America is the scene for speculation. The trade of America to China is as free as the winds. Has any great English merchant emigrated there to pursue it? I never can indulge in those dreams of merchants and manufacturers quitting wealthy and luxurious England to settle here.

But argument has been answered by example; and it has been said that America, though a country small in capital, carries on a trade directly with Asia. It is true, and the difference of situation may be alone sufficient to make it a more eligible trade for America than for Ireland. For instance, were America to get her teas from China circuitously through Britain, her teas would come to her incumbered with the freight, first from China to London, which is further than to her own ports; and then from London to America. What a monstrous and excentric navigation is this? Whereas our teas only come charged with the freight from China to London, and then from London to Dublin, which is, comparatively, but a small aberration. If America had a wealthy neighbour, as near to her, as England is to us, who would supply her with Asiatic productions, perhaps she would prefer being so supplied. Add to this, that it does not follow, from America pursuing the trade herself, that it is wise in her to do so. It is well known, that trade may be profitable to the merchant, but injurious to the country. And here is a great error into which many gentlemen fall.—They say, “if the trade is a bad one, the merchant will not pursue it;” and this is so far true, that if the trade was an unprofitable one for the merchant, he would not pursue it. But if it was profitable to him, though ever so unprofitable to the country, he would. Now this I say is the fact, with respect to a trade with China. I will give an example which every man may understand.—Suppose a merchant here had 50,000*l.* capital, and that he sent it to Asia for Asiatic manufactures; and that he afterwards sold those manufactures to some of the European nations at a good profit. This would be a good trade for him; but what would the country gain?—It would enable him to live more luxuriously; but 10,000*l.* capital employed in home trade and home manufacture, would be infinitely more advantageous to the country; would employ more hands, and give the poor more bread. Ask the manufacturer in the Liberty, how many men would ten thousand pounds employ in home manufactures, and what wealth and industry it would diffuse? And then let any man say that 50,000*l.* sent floating round the Cape of Good Hope to China, would be as useful or as profitable to the nation. Hitherto I have considered this subject in its commercial aspect; now view it in its political one. I ask you, do you know what treaties now subsist between Great Britain and fo-

reign states with respect to this trade? Do you know how far Ireland is included in these treaties? Or to what insult and confiscation an Irish merchantman might now be exposed in the Indian Ocean? What happened to Scotland in the reign of William III.? The Scotch established an East India Company, which was incorporated by their king, and sanctioned by their parliament: What was the consequence? England was in a ferment of discontent: France, Spain, and Holland remonstrated; the Spaniards attacked them with arms; the English with famine; and of 2,800 brave men that went out upon their first expedition, not above 100 returned home alive. Is this a situation into which we should imprudently and wantonly precipitate the intrepid spirit of our countrymen? What happened to the East India Company established at Ostend by the Emperor of Germany in 1722? England and Holland remonstrated against it—what followed? The right honourable baronet has read the sequel out of the subsequent treaty.

If then so potent a prince as the Emperor of Germany was thus compelled to renounce for ever so favourite an object, as the East India Company, which he himself had established, and which he struggled for nine years to protect; what might we expect if we were to embark now in this trade, without any previous treaty formed, or any explanation whatsoever with any potentate upon earth?

I shall cite one instance more, to shew the jealousy of nations about any interference with each other in this trade. By the treaty of Westphalia, which is ratified by all the subsequent treaties down to the present day; Spain is bound not to fail to the East Indies by the Cape of Good Hope; and therefore can carry on no trade directly from Europe to the East Indies. Now I ask, what would be the consequence if we sent a ship to China, and that she was captured by some European state, how would you proceed? What treaty could you refer to? Suppose the Dutch, for instance, were to seize your ship. I will read you the words of the last treaty between them and Great Britain. In "1784, the States General of the United Provinces promise and engage not to interrupt the navigation of British subjects in the Oriental Seas."

By this they are bound not to interrupt the navigation of British subjects; but not one word of Irish subjects. You will not say that we are British subjects; Ireland is not Britain—what follows? That Ireland is not included in the treaty. But if you say, that though we are not protected against such an outrage by treaty, yet we are protected against it by the law of nations. Admitted. But the law of nations is a much more indistinct and unsatisfactory security than treaty; for if it was not, there would be no need of treaty to sanction it. But suppose the law of nations ever so clearly in your favour, I ask how

are you to enforce it? Where is your fleet? Will you apply to Great Britain, and desire her to go to war for you? Now I will suppose her conduct as favourable to you as you could desire, and that she goes to war for you; I ask you, how much of the expence of such a war would it be expected that you should bear? Or in what century would all the profits you could hope to make by the India trade, repay you for your share of the contribution? How many useful manufactures at home would the very war destroy? How many future manufactures would the incumbrance incurred by such a war ever after depress? Who then, is there among us, that can put his hand to his heart and say, he sees his way through this business? For my part, I cannot.

Mr. EGAN having observed the pleasure with which gentlemen on the other side heard Sir Laurence Parsons, remarked that "there was more joy among them for one sinner that repented, than for ninety and nine just persons (pointing to the opposition side of the House) who needed no repentance." He said the motion before them was for leave to bring in a bill to remove restrictions from an undeniable right; the present, he observed, was not the time for debating the bill.—He recommended it to the House to leave the trade open, and let the merchants take their chance and find capitals where they could.—It had been said that to engage in the trade would divert the capital of the country from the channels of agriculture and more lucrative commerce—Let the bill be brought in, said he, and see whether the merchants will petition against it from fear of its directing their capital into unprofitable traffic.—The simple object of the motion, he again observed was only to have a law, that had skulked into the House in the langour of a stupid evening, kicked out of it—It was vain in ministers to terrify the House with the threat of English hostility—the measure only went to extricate the majority of the people of England, as well as ourselves, from the trammels of monopoly, which they were as desirous as we are to get rid of.

Mr. ARCHDALL followed Mr. Egan, for whom, after some short remarks, he declared great personal respect, because he said that at a certain distance, and in some degree the honourable gentleman certainly was, when he did not speak, a little like Mr. Charles Fox.—He then considered what a monopoly was, and first, whether England held the advantage of an Indian trade merely for herself; he asked if, among fellow subjects, it was a paradox or an impropriety to say, an Englishman and an Irishman were the same; when abroad did even strangers make the difference which is affected by ourselves? among them although an Irishman might be proud of his character, was he disgraced by being taken for an Englishman?—When he was called one, did he not feel he was

one?—and acquiesce under a name that belonged to him?—and why, because the appellation which met his ear, found a corresponding salutation at his heart?—He said he would not repeat uncontradicted arguments, but if it were true, that England was part of an empire, she was but a part; all her advantages must naturally mix and circulate through the constituting mass—that you might as well command the great artery of the body to withhold the blood of the right hand; for that while the one continued to beat, the other must be nourished.

He next adverted to an assertion which had been made and printed, which was that England is, in this instance, acting towards Ireland, as Spain would have acted towards England, had not England with the assistance of Ireland been able to prevent it. He denied that there was any comparison between the hostility of Spain, a foreign and rival power, and between commercial regulations which England and Ireland have agreed to establish together; and said that their connection should be looked upon as a partnership, where Ireland was the partner, and like all other partners bound by articles of consent, express or implied, from any separate speculation that might interfere with the common property or firm of the house. He next adverted to what had been said by the honourable gentleman who made the motion, and who had observed, that the character of a Protestant parliament might be much in danger of the opinions of the people, if his motion was rejected. He said nothing could justify such assertions and insinuations, for that it was as true, which he would illustrate by remarking, it was as true in society, as it was in nature, that where attraction once ceases, repulsion begins. After some observations concerning Irish capitals necessary for this purpose, he took up the consideration of the right to this branch of commerce, on the footing of the Irish free trade; this, he said, although the last and the greatest argument, with some gentlemen for the motion, was with him, the least and the easiest answered; for that the freedom of our trade was left untouched and unattempted, for who attempted to touch it, but yourselves; what parliament but your own: that it was not a dispute about syllables, but that there was a difference between having a right without impeachment, and exerting it contrary to judgment; that the question was not, about metaphysical right, but practical utility; not an abstract idea, but a circumstance of life. That rights were, indeed, nowadays, lost in words, which were so put together that the rights of man, were made the wrongs of society.—He said, that every child might be taught to cry out, a free trade cannot be restrained; but that every man ought to know a free agent is not free to do any thing, when that which is free, is controlled, by the sense of that which is expedient; it is not the restriction, but the direction of liberty. He said that, for his part, he would never insist upon a parliamentary authority, to work a public

embarrassment; and for these and other considerations concluded, with calling on the House to resist the proposition; for although it might answer a popular, he thought it would not answer a useful purpose; and that in these times no man should sacrifice the conviction, when it was given him by truth, for the popularity which might be bought too dear: nor should he be afraid to say, what every body must think, that they use a patriot mask, upon a party motion.

Right Hon. BURTON CONYNHAM. I am not at all surprised that gentlemen are fond of giving scope to mercantile adventure. As to the motion, I have an opinion different from that of either side of the House. If Britain thought it for the good of the empire to confine the trade to a monopoly, the people of Ireland loved the empire too well to dissent. Yet, I must think that something should be done with respect to this trade. Many things in the charter of the company pressed hard on this country, and called for alteration. I know not whether the trade was not an advantageous one; but I think that other countries would not have engaged in the trade with so much avidity if it were not profitable. The import of India commodities into this country, amounting to nearly 500,000*l.* per annum, were such as suggested no mean idea of the importance of the trade; besides the English merchants are now speculating on sugars, and thinking of bringing them from the East on better terms than they at present have them from the West Indies. If the monopoly of the East shall still remain with the company, this country would lose a very large sum in this article, the imports in which annually amount to upwards of 400,000*l.* I argue not against the monopoly, but I think if Ireland gave up the trade she should do it with her eyes open. It would be unfair to infer from gentlemen's opposing this motion, that they were adverse to every restriction or modification of the monopoly;—for my part I am of opinion some restrictions are necessary, though I shall vote against the motion. As to the argument that the trade was not beneficial, it deserved no weight, merchants might reason from that circumstance either for or against engaging in the trade; but it was not a consideration that influenced nations, which ought not to have their rights confined by any such petty considerations. England, for instance, would not bear control on restriction even in the worthless trade of Nootka.

He then made some observations on the backward state of Ireland in maritime affairs, occasioned solely by the restraints under which her commerce had laboured the whole shipping of the kingdom of Ireland, he said, amounted not to one-third of the shipping of the little town of Liverpool—the House should not then by their arguments against the trade, depress the rising spirit of the country.

Mr. BARRINGTON talked a good deal about party, faction, &c. &c. and concluded by declaring, he would vote against the motion.

Mr. CURRAN said, as the silence of gentlemen on questions of this kind, was considered a crime he would preserve himself from blame, by saying a few words. He then entered into a vindication of Mr. Grattan, for having been silent on this subject, he had been engaged in a greater work, that of raising that House to the honourable situation it then held; in which they might be independent if they would. By the present motion the House was not called on to disturb the public tranquillity, but merely to expunge the interlineation of their clerk, by which the country had been long deprived of benefits to which Great Britain would have waded through an expence of blood and millions. He adverted to the distinction that had been made, that this was not giving up a right, but making a voluntary concession of the exercise of that right; this, he said, was not merely submitting to subjugation, but coming forward to demand the chain with the meanness and servility of a Cappadocian. Other gentlemen had said, "dost engage the country in a trade that has ruined all that have ever ventured in it," as if gentlemen thought that the motion went to engage them to create commissioners to send the bread of the country to India to be eaten. No act of parliament can prescribe the channels in which commerce shall flow—it was the object of the motion only to leave the field of commerce open to the merchant, and let him avail himself of advantages as he can. The smallness of our capital had been urged against the motion;—that objection, he said, amounted to this—"You have but little money! therefore buy at London for 200l. what you can import directly into Dublin for 50l."—He desired the House to consider whether, as men of common faith and common probity, they could refuse to their fellow-subjects the exercise of this right, which all acknowledged them to possess;—for his part, he thought not; and by the determination of the House on this question their character would stand or fall, if Ireland was not a besotted nation: on those who held out the threat of hostile retaliation, if the House should agree to this motion, he was particularly severe. He protested that his blood run cold when he conceived even for a moment this country in such circumstances, that she dreaded hostility from a sister kingdom, for asserting and exercising what was acknowledged her undoubted right.—Really, the question was not at all between Britain and Ireland; but between the people of Ireland together with the unchartered people of England; and a small number of chartered monopolists. The present he conceived to be a question of general liberty, and as a friend to the liberties of the people of England and Ireland, he should vote for it.

Mr. GRATTAN followed Mr. Curran, and supported the motion: he said that the House of Commons of Ireland were not justified—had no power to reject the principle of a bill, which, like the present, was to confer a benefit to the people of Ireland—to liberate the commerce and constitution of the kingdom, which, from what had been advanced by gentlemen, appeared to hang and depend from the constitution and commerce of Britain—He alluded to the treaty of the Emperor mentioned by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and called it a capitulation; the case of Portugal did not apply to the present case, for there the India trade was given up for a valuable consideration; none was proposed here. Parliament had, he granted, a right to modify and regulate trade, but they had none to destroy it, as they did the India commerce.

The obligation of this country to Great Britain was little; he mentioned her modification of the channel trade, and her interpretation of the navigation act, as instances of unfair conduct on the part of Britain. As to the profits of this or any other trade, parliament had no right to take them into consideration: to leave the trade open was their duty, that of the merchant to consider of its profits. The want of capital was a frivolous objection, for if the bill passed there would be imported capital; he knew that there was a very large foreign capital ready to be embarked tomorrow in the trade if it were opened; and he called to the recollection of gentlemen that the principal arguments ministers had used in favour of the propositions was, that foreign capital would be immediately imported if those propositions passed. He cleared himself from the imputation of being silent on this subject for thirteen years, by proving, that whenever the subject was brought forward, he had always taken an active part—but he had always looked to the period of the India Company's charter, as the only favourable time for agitating this question.

Mr. CORRY said he would not have risen, but that two honourable gentlemen had mentioned the former moving of this subject.

He said, in the free trade of 1779, the East India trade was omitted.—In the free constitution of 1782, the East India trade was omitted:—He therefore moved it in 1783 and 1784, and the right of the country was in consequence acknowledged. After that time he had, though in full possession of that measure, thought it most proper to let it remain quiet; and during four years after that period, at which time he first moved it, yet he never thought it wise to move the House to come to any specific measure. The reasons and principles on which he did so, it would be tedious to mention; but the same opinions he entertained during four years, that he acted on the opposite side of the House, he equally retained now; and would give his vote

against any measure to be taken in that House in the first instance, as an improper mode of proceeding.

Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY, in an able and animated speech, replied to the various arguments that had been adduced against the motion: he paid a handsome compliment to Mr. Burton Conyngham, in whom he said, it appeared the spirit of the gentleman was not yet sunk into the meanness of the courtier. He renewed his profession, that though his motion should be now lost—he would never vote with any administration till this, and the other measures to which he and the gentlemen with whom he acted, were pledged, should be obtained.

On a division, Ayes	-	-	70
Noes	-	-	156

Tellers for the ayes, Mr. Egan and Mr. George Ponsonby ;
for the noes, Hon. Mr. Stewart and Sir L. Parsons.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 1792.

Sir EDWARD NEWENHAM said, that he never gave a vote in or out of parliament, but agreeable to what he thought best for his country; that he came down to this House last night, determined to support the free trade of this kingdom, but, from the arguments urged by two respectable characters [meaning, we suppose, Sir Laurence Parsons and the Hon. Mr. Stewart] he was induced to vote against the motion: that he had since consulted a number of his constituents (in the mercantile line) and, in general, they differed with him; and, therefore, having ever made it the rule of his parliamentary conduct to follow the opinion of those who sent him there as their delegate, he took that opportunity of regretting the vote he gave last night, and would repair that unintentional error whenever that measure was again agitated.

He further observed, that those constituents of his had drawn this line, "Support our unalienable rights to a free trade; if we find our exercising that trade is likely to create a jealousy between the two countries, agree to a heavy tax on such articles and manufactures; if you find them injurious to the Irish manufacturers, prohibit them." He said, that if his vote was an error, it was the first he ever committed in a longer life of public service than any member of that House had acted in.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER took this occasion of making a remark in reply to some reasoning, which had fallen from the gentlemen on the other side of the House, and which he had not an opportunity of stating last night: this was, to declare, that there was no law, whatsoever, existing in this country, which

precluded our trade to kingdoms beyond the Cape of Good Hope, or Streights of Magellan, saving in the single article of tea, and that solely: nay, more, there had been an act existing in this country, and which expired only last year, for encouraging us by bounties to the fisheries in that quarter.

Mr. GRATTAN, in vindication of the principles he had supported last night, observed, that this very tea, was the sole article by which this country could derive any advantage; and therefore the argument was like that of a man, who, by fraud should possess himself of the rents and profits of an estate, and then tell the right owner his title was good, and his right unquestionable, and that no more was intended but merely to withhold the rents and profits of it, without meaning the smallest objection to his title.

He said that the candor of the honourable gentleman [Sir Edward Newenham] did him credit—that it was also a proof that the opinion of merchants was against your determination of the last night, and furnished a new argument for resuming the question.

The Speaker put an end to the conversation, as there was no question before the House.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 1792.

The committee of ways and means sat, made progress, reported, and adjourned to Monday. After which the House, without proceeding to any business, adjourned to next day.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 1792.

Mr. MASON presented the stamp duty bill;—the bill for facilitating the trade between this kingdom and the United States of America;—the loan bill, and the bill for granting the several sums therein mentioned for pious and charitable purposes, which were read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time on Monday.

Mr. HOLMES presented a petition from Henry Ormsby, marshal of the Four Courts, praying compensation.

Ordered to lie on the table.

Mr. STEWART (Tyrone) rose, in consequence of notice given a few days ago, to request the attention of the House to the situ-

ation of the Presbyterian ministers of the province of Ulster: a body of men, he said, whose character and conduct place them high in the esteem of their country, and ensure to their cause a favourable reception in this House, though in the hands of so weak an advocate. When I move you to make some further provision for those ministers, it is not their cause alone that is before you; the interest of that numerous and valuable part of his majesty's subjects under their care is deeply involved in the fate of the business; the whole body of Presbyterians in the province of Ulster will be benefited by your generosity to their clergy, and it must be allowed that no description of people has a stronger claim upon it. Taught by the example, as well as the precepts of their clergy, the people of Ulster are peaceable and industrious, obedient to the laws, and respectful to magistrates; they are attached to his Majesty's person and illustrious family; and I may venture to call them hereditary friends to our happy constitution, as established at the Revolution in 1688; to which glorious event the services of their ancestors eminently contributed.

I shall beg leave to state to the House that the charge on the establishment of 2700*l.* under the head of non-conforming ministers, is divided between the ministers of the Synod of Ulster, who receive 2200*l.* and the Presbyterian ministers called Seceders, who receive 500*l.* that it appears from the papers on the table, that these sums afford to each minister of the Synod of Ulster a dividend of 1*l.* 3*s.* only, and to each minister of the Seceders 9*l.* 17*s.* 3*d.*; such provision, I think, far inadequate both to their wants and to their merit. There is another mark of royal bounty, which, though it does not properly come before the House, yet as it is highly honourable to those who enjoy it, I shall now take notice of: it is a grant of 800*l.* paid out of the king's privy purse, which is now equally divided between the Synod of Ulster and the ministers of the southern association: it was given by George the First, as an acknowledgment for the services of the Presbyterians of Ireland in support of the Protestant succession in the illustrious House of Hanover; to which succession those who now enjoy the grant are as strongly attached as their predecessors were, and as firm friends to the Protestant ascendancy. I conclude by moving, "That an humble address be presented to his majesty, beseeching his majesty to take into his consideration the situation of the Presbyterian ministers of the province of Ulster, and to make such further provision for them as in his wisdom and bounty he shall think fit; and that this House will make good the same."

Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY seconded the motion.

Sir EDWARD NEWENHAM expressed his warm regard for, and bore testimony to the loyalty and virtues of the Protestant Dis-

senters; that they had always been steady friends to the House of Hanover; that as parliament was going to grant favours to the Roman Catholics, they could not refuse justice to the Presbyterian clergy; their principles and conduct merited every favour from a Protestant government; the character of the member who spoke in their behalf must ensure success to their wish.

Right Hon. Mr. HOBART said, no man could be more disposed to contribute to the advantage of all his majesty's peaceable and loyal subjects than he was; he rose to give his most hearty concurrence to the measure. There certainly were no subjects more loyal or more dutiful than those in whose favour the hon. gentleman had spoken, and he therefore most heartily coincided in his intention: there was one point however in which he differed from the right hon. gentleman; he had said, that they were not entitled to any compliment from the circumstance of his being their advocate; from this he totally differed, as he thought they could not possibly have chosen an advocate of more weight and respectability.

Mr. CORRY spoke on behalf of that description of Presbyterians called Seceders, whom he described as men of as much loyalty as any in the state, and as well deserving the favour of the House; he hoped they would be included in whatever the liberality of the House should determine.

Mr. STEWART said, the Seceders were included in his motion; and appealed to the secretary whether he had not understood it to be so.

Mr. CHARLES O'NEIL said, that there were Presbyterian ministers in the south who lay under similar difficulties, and who were also a very worthy deserving body of men. He did not mean to reflect upon the merits of the Presbyterians of Ulster, when he asserted that a more exemplary set of men could no where be found than the Presbyterians of the south; he hoped they also would be included: and he proposed an amendment, that a further provision should be extended to the Presbyterian clergy of the south.

Mr. BAGWELL supported the amendment.

Mr. STEWART said, that he had no authority from any member of the southern association to introduce them into his motion, but he wished much that they should enjoy the full benefit of it.

After some conversation it was agreed, that the words, "the province of Ulster," should be expunged, and the words, "this kingdom," be inserted in their room; and the question being put on the motion thus amended, it was unanimously agreed to; and

it was resolved, that this House will on Monday next, resolve itself into a committee of the whole House, to take said motion into consideration.

Mr. GRATTAN said, he hoped a liberal sum sufficient to include them all would be granted.

The order of the day, that a bill to remove certain restraints and disabilities therein mentioned, to which his majesty's subject, professing the Popish religion, are now subject, be read a second time ; it being read,

Mr. BAGWELL rose to move that that order be discharged and a new order made for Wednesday ; it was on Saturday last that an order was made for printing the bill, the printing must have taken some time, it must have been by Tuesday's general post, that any copies could be sent through the country at large. Gentlemen would judge whether it was possible from Wednesday to the present day, (Saturday) that the counties and great corporations of Ireland could have assembled, considered the bill, and transmitted their opinions to their representatives ; for myself, I would feel it very awkward and distressing if I should this night take a part in the subject, which a few days might shew me my constituents disapproved.

Right Hon. GEORGE OGLE. I am in the same predicament with the hon. gentleman. I am informed that my constituents meet this day ; how shall I, who have ever held it my duty to consult their opinion, attempt to decide without knowing what that opinion is. I hope the hon. baronet will make no difficulty in accommodating the Protestants of Ireland, but allow them a reasonable time for deliberation. I therefore second the motion for postponing the second reading of the bill.

Sir HERCULES LANGRISHE. There is no instance of accommodation in the power of man that I would not most willingly shew the right hon. gentleman, if the business was only a private and personal transaction between him and me.

If I had not, on the day that I first made the motion to bring in this bill, stated, with the most circumstantial precision, the whole scope and intention of it ; if I had not in the drawing of the bill adhered to the points of that statement, with the most rigid punctuality ; if I had deviated in the smallest instance from what I originally proposed, I should most willingly comply with the motion. But, Sir, in my opinion, it becomes a member of parliament to be precise in every proposition he lays before the House, and not to recede to accommodate the wishes even of the friends he most respects. It certainly was proposed to take the opinion of the kingdom upon the subject, and for that purpose

large intervals of time were allowed in the stages of the bill and progress, that the kingdom might fully consider it: there is still a week to the committing of the bill; and on this day sen'night, when a motion shall be made that the Speaker leave the chair, in order that the House may go into a committee on the bill, there will be full opportunity to debate its principle; and when it goes into a committee, its several clauses may be debated. Holding it therefore an object of duty and of honour to proceed; and being assured that the sense of the kingdom may be fully known by Saturday next, I must decline deferring the second reading beyond this day.

Right Hon. GEORGE OGLE. Sir, I grant the honourable baronet, that every member of this House, who was present on the day he stated his bill to the House, was fully apprized of his intention; but our constituents were not present, and yet it is our duty to inform and to consult them all upon this momentous subject. Sir, there are but three general posts in each week: the bill was ordered to be printed last Saturday; by what possibility then could the constituent body of Ireland, could the Protestants of the kingdom receive the bill, meet in their various places of assembling, and by this day instruct their representatives? As to myself, I am decidedly against precipitancy. I am decidedly against any thing that can militate against the Protestant ascendancy. The honourable baronet says he is pledged to the House; why, Sir, sure the honourable baronet knows the House can relieve him; to the House therefore I apply, and on behalf of the Protestants of Ireland, I desire that no precipitate act may be made to the injury of their ascendancy.

Right Hon. Mr. CUFFE said, it will be in the power of my right hon. friend to debate the bill on Saturday next, by which time he may be fully instructed by his constituents. Certainly there was a description of Roman Catholics that deserved much of parliament. And I am happy to say they were the most respectable class; to such men I would wish to grant whatever did not militate against the Protestant ascendancy. I see no inconvenience from reading the bill a second time this day.

Hon. DENIS BROWN said, I hope no gentleman will now stir questions of religion that have long been at rest; the consideration of the bill was deferred till every gentleman in that House had an opportunity of consulting his constituents; and it would be a long time before the bill would be discussed. The words Protestant Community and Protestant Constituents go, in my opinion, to imply that the Protestant establishment was in danger. That there is a difference of interests between the people of Ireland, is granted; and to remove religious discord, so long ruinous

to the country, I wish the bill to pass. I am too much interested in the welfare of Ireland not to deprecate the revival of religious distinctions.

Right Hon. GEORGE OGLE. I am a good deal surprized at this unhandsome attack. The hon. gentleman says, I want to make a religious dispute. Sir, I do not want to make a religious dispute. But the hon. gentleman is angry that I mentioned the word "Protestant;" Sir, while I have life, I will mention the word Protestant with honour and respect. I never was the religious enemy of any man; but I am not the friend of those who would force the Roman Catholics into power, and turn the Protestants out: I am not the friend of those who would destroy the Protestant ascendancy in Ireland, and raise the Roman Catholic in its place: No, Sir, whatever I might be disposed to concede to humble loyal supplication, I never will bend to demands insolent, inflammatory, nay treasonable.

Mr. BROWNE answered Mr. Ogle, that he had by no means imputed such inattention to him, but merely stated the effect such words would have on the community.

Sir HENRY CAVENDISH did not think it a question of religion at all, and hoped the House would proceed.

Mr. MAXWELL. Sir, I agree with the hon. gentleman who made the motion for postponement. and the right hon. gentleman who seconded it; but for a right reason not yet taken notice of; I think with those hon. gentlemen that it has been extremely hurried. But one short week has been allowed, and in that week there has been a petition from a Protestant town (Belfast), signed by Protestants, and presented to a Protestant parliament; praying us to surrender the Protestant ascendancy. Now, as I am curious to know whether there be any other Protestants in the kingdom of the same inclination, I wish for a little more time to hear the sentiments of our constituents.

Right Hon. Mr. HOBART observed, that if it was understood that no debate was to take place till the motion for going into a committee on the bill, it was a matter of no importance whether it was read a second time this day or Wednesday. As to the petition that had been mentioned by an hon. gentleman, it was much below the dignity of parliament to take notice of it.

Mr. STAPLES. I never knew such a delay refused on the most trifling subject; but to refuse it on a question of this importance would be in the highest degree improper. There never was before this House a subject of so much magnitude; whatever is to

be done in it, I would wish to see it done without a division: but if gentlemen persist in their refusing to accommodate, by a short delay, those who desire to act under the instruction of their constituents, a division must take place.

Sir JAMES COTTER spoke to the same effect.

Right Hon. Mr. HOBERT said, it being understood that the bill was not to be debated till Saturday; as one, to accommodate gentlemen, he had no objection to the second reading being ordered for Wednesday, and the committal for Saturday.

Mr. G. PONSONBY. The division of last Thursday has shewn me how vain a thing it is to oppose the right hon. gentleman's will; I do therefore most perfectly acquiesce in his pleasure; and I would advise gentlemen on this side, as it is vain to resist, to shew the most perfect acquiescence also.

The bill was ordered to be read a second time on Wednesday next.

Mr. COOKE presented a bill to punish mutiny and desertion; which was read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time on Monday.

The House adjourned to Monday.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 1792.

Mr. G. PONSONBY gave notice that he would, at a future day, move for leave to bring in a bill for ascertaining the law respecting libels. As he wished that the law in this instance should be as nearly as possible the same in both kingdoms, it should be his object to form his bill according to the English act for that purpose.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL said, he had entertained a similar intention, and waited only for the completion of the English act, in order to form his on that model.

Mr. PONSONBY afterwards mentioned, that as his right hon. friend [Mr. GIATTAN] intended to postpone for some time longer his promised motion relative to the East India trade, he should, to-morrow, propose a motion relative to the application of the sugar tax to the uses of the public roads, &c.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER observed, that when this subject was mentioned the other evening, he had said, that

when the finances of the country should be in a clear and unembarrassed state, he should have no objection to apply any redundancy of revenue that might arise to great and national purposes. Among those, however, he could not place that of the repair, &c. of the roads in the first rank, though certainly it was an useful one. But exclusive of that consideration, he hoped to be able to shew when the motion came before the House, that there were many new and extraordinary expences which would occur in the ensuing year, and which would more than exhaust any surplus of the revenue that could be hoped for. He mentioned the increased military expence of 28,000*l.* the expence for transportation of convicts, and the increased provision for the Presbyterian clergy, which had been voted on Saturday.

He concluded by hoping the House would minutely enquire into the probable state of the ensuing year's finance before they would agree to the measure.

Mr. PONSONBY replied, that, according to the right honourable baronet's own statement on a former day, there was a probability of a redundancy of 40,000*l.* in the revenue of next year above the ordinary expence, even without the addition of the new tax on sugar; the sum of both, therefore, he thought must be more than adequate to all the purposes the right honourable bart. had enumerated.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said, he could not agree in that statement, but should reserve himself for further explanation till the business came properly before the House.

Mr. HOBART called on Mr. Grattan, to know when he intended to propose his motion relative to the East India trade.

Mr. GRATTAN said, he thought it best to postpone it till the money bills were disposed of; he should, however, give timely notice of the day on which he meant to propose it.

House in committee to enquire into the effects of the spirit licence act. Heard counsel in support of the brewer's petition.

Counsellor Guinness, for the petitioners, produced Mr. Sweetman, an eminent brewer of Dublin, as evidence in support of the allegations. The result of his testimony was, that there has been no increase in the consumption of malt liquors since the enactment of that law; that the quantity of spirits consumed in this city within the quarter ending at Christmas 1791, was greater by 9000 gallons, than the quantity consumed within the corresponding quarter, ending Christmas 1790; that more distilleries have been erected since the passing of that law, and are still erecting; that several breweries in this city have since then been converted into distilleries, and one large brewery in Belfast had undergone

a similar mutation; and that upon the whole, the brewery of this kingdom is in a state of decline compared with its state previous to, and at the year 1762, when the kingdom brewed upwards of 600,000 gallons.

After examining Mr. Sweetman the committee adjourned.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 1792.

Mr. STEWART brought up the resolution of the committee of the whole House, for an address to his majesty in favour of the Presbyterian clergy of this kingdom; which was agreed to by the House.

The House, according to order, resolved itself into a committee of the whole House, to examine further whether the late regulations for encouraging the brewery, and the preventing the excessive use of spirituous liquors, have had the desired effect.

Counsellor Guinness having stated the case of the breweries of Dublin, proceeded to examine some of that body, in support of their petition; and first Mr. Madder, whose evidence went to prove that the brewery has for the last nine months been in a very declining state, in consequence of the great consumption of spirits; that the profits of the brewer were reduced almost to nothing, as they did not exceed 3d. on a hogshead of porter. In his opinion the grand obstacle to the prosperity of the brewery was the encouragement given to the distillery.

Mr. Guinness, brewer, of James's-gate, was examined: he had been for thirty years in the brewing trade, and had never known it in a worse state than at present; of its declining state he supposed the three principal causes were, the encreased consumption of spirits, the consumption of English malt liquors, and the high price of malt. The distillery, he said, at present enjoyed an advantage it had never done before; for by the late parliamentary regulations the consumption of foreign spirits had greatly decreased, by which the consumption of the home spirit was encreased; the wholesale price of spirits was therefore encreased, but the price of the naggin continued the same, because the retailer deteriorated its quality. He thought the best mode to encourage the brewery was to imitate the sister country, whose brewery was the first in the world; first, by laying a heavy duty on distillation, by protecting the Irish brewer against the foreign brewer, as England had done, where there is a duty of 25s. a barrel on beer imported. The consumption of spirits in Dublin he stated to have encreased 97,177 gallons, in the three quarters ending Dec. 1791, above the three quarters ending Dec. 1790.

Mr. J. G. Kennedy, ale brewer, was examined as to the state of the ale trade; by whose testimony it appeared to be declining very fast,

the decrease in consumption of the nine months previous to Dec. 1791, being 2452 barrels, compared with the consumption of the corresponding nine months of the year 1790. The best mode of encouraging the trade, in his opinion, would be to remove the excise from the ale, and place it on the malt.

The evidence on the part of the brewers being closed, Right Honourable J. Beresford called in Mr. Edwards, a distiller, whose testimony was in substance, that the consumption of spirits in Dublin had increased within the last year, but that of the apparent increase much was only brought into public view by the late regulations, the same quantity probably having been clandestinely distilled before. That formerly large quantities of spirits used to be brought into Dublin from the country, of late none has been brought in; but Dublin, on the contrary, has sent much to the country; that the distilling trade is now a much more eligible one for a man to embark in than it formerly was, the profits being more permanent and certain; that when pale butt was at first made of good quality it hurt the distillery, but the depraved quality of it after some time freed the distillers from their fears; that when whiskey was only 2s. 4d. the gallon, it paid 1s. 2d. duty; now that the same spirits is 4s. 4d. per gallon, it pays duty 1s. 7d.

Mr. Brophy, distiller, was examined. He had been in the brewery trade, and had quitted it because he was not inclined to give douceurs to procure customers as other brewers did; he stated the profit on a barrel of pale butt to be from nine to ten shillings, when malt was at 20s. per barrel; the profits on porter at 4s. and that on beer at 3s. per barrel; the cause of the decline in the brewery, he said, lay with the brewers themselves, who, by vying with each other for customers, depraved the quality of their drink, in order to sell cheap and be able to give presents.

Committee then adjourned to Friday next.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1792.

On the second reading of the revenue bill, a conversation took place between Mr. Brown, of the College, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, relative to the appropriating of the surplus of the loan duties; Mr. Brown being of opinion that this surplus would be more properly applied in paying off part of the principal of the debenture debt, than lowering the rate of interest payable thereon.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER wished to see always at least half a year's produce of those duties in the treasury, in order to secure the public credit against unforeseen exigences.

Whenever a very considerable redundancy should be forthcoming the House would no doubt apply it with wisdom, but he trusted they would never leave the security of public credit to the mercy of chance, by leaving the treasury empty.

Mr. BROWN said, his object was twofold ; first, to bring the old system again into use, he meant that of applying the redundancies of the duties to the discharge of the principal debt ; and secondly, to strip the statements of Government of that fallacy in which they were veiled for the purpose of deceiving the public : Government, he said, existed on the produce of the lottery and the surplus of the loan duties ; he was convinced of the fact from this circumstance, that the practice of applying the produce of those two to the discharge of debt, ceased at the time when the new taxes were granted on the faith of Government equalizing expence and revenue : the objection which the right honourable bart. stated against applying the surplus to the discharge of the debt had always existed in as great force as at present, and yet the practice of applying them to the discharge of the debt had always prevailed, till the period he had mentioned. He could not for his part conceive how the reduction of interest could possibly be as advantageous to the House as diminishing the debt. On these grounds he gave notice that he should, on the third reading, move some amendments. He then alluded to some errors in the statement of the public accounts, which however he could not at this moment specifically mention, but should shortly state them to the House.

Mr. GRATTAN observed, that the objection of the right honourable bart. to applying the redundancies of loan duties to the discharging of debt, could never have been urged with less plausibility than at present ; because, if the whole of that redundancy were thus applied, there would still be a sufficient sum in the treasury to secure the public credit against contingencies, namely, that which had hitherto been issued as the drawback on spirits, which drawback was now with-held.

Read a second time the popery bill ; which was committed for Saturday.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 1792.

Mr. JOHN O'NEIL said, he held in his hand a petition which he received by the post of this morning, and was instructed to present to the House ; it was signed by the names of 350 Protestant inhabitants, the gentlemen, clergy, and freeholders of the four lower baronies of the county of Antrim ; and would, he

was assured, have been signed by a thousand had it not been for the shortness of time, since they understood the Roman Catholic bill was to have been debated this day.

In the petition they state, they will feel themselves happy that the Roman Catholics should receive every liberal immunity consistent with the spirit of our glorious constitution, and with the safety and interest of the Protestant religion. The petition was received, and ordered to lie on the table.

Mr. GRATTAN gave notice, that in addition to the privileges now about to be granted to the Roman Catholics, the power of becoming professors of botany, anatomy and chemistry, should be given.

Hon. Mr. KNOX said, he also intended to propose that they should be permitted to take the academic degrees in the university of Dublin.

Hon. DENIS BROWNE rose to say, he would second both these intentions.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL said, under the present laws of the university, Roman Catholics could not be admitted to take degrees without taking the oaths usually taken by Protestants; as the university is a corporation deriving by charter under the crown, and governed by laws prescribed by its founder, it would not be very decorous for parliament to break through those laws; but the king might, if such was his pleasure, direct the college to dispense with these oaths; and, in his opinion, it would be wise to do so.

Mr. KNOX said, it was not his intention to infringe upon any prerogative of the crown, but he could not see how this proposal was an infringement, as the bill must in its ultimate stage pass under the inspection of the crown, and receive the royal assent; nevertheless, if any gentlemen of the university would rise and say that the wish of the university was to have these impediments removed, he would then not think it necessary to make the motion.

Sir HERCULES LANGRISHÉ. The bill is intended to remove certain disabilities which the Catholics (by law) labour under; now there is no law as to this point: When it became necessary for me, in framing the bill, to search through the laws relative to education, I found there was no law to prohibit Roman Catholics from taking degrees, but the rules of the university itself; these rules can be changed whenever the crown shall think proper, but it would be very unbecoming for the parliament to interfere.

As to the principle, there can be no difference of opinion; we differ only as to the mode of carrying it into effect.

DoctOR BROWNE (of the College). I am unable to say what the sentiments of the heads of the college are upon this subject, as they have not informed me; but the reason the right hon. gentleman has stated is certainly the true reason why Roman Catholics are not admitted to degrees: If it shall be deemed expedient to admit them, the college must be much enlarged, and a greater number of governors must be appointed. My own sentiment is, that such a measure would tend much to remove prejudices, and to make them coalesce with Protestants; this is my own sentiment, and the sentiment of several persons of the university, but I cannot say whether it be the sentiment of the majority. If the House shall think the measure expedient, they may address his majesty to remove the oath which bars them from taking degrees.

PETITION OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC COMMITTEE.

Mr. EGAN held in his hand a petition which he said was signed by fifty of the most respectable commercial characters in this city, Roman Catholics, on behalf of themselves and their brethren throughout the kingdom. In presenting this petition he considered himself as merely complying with his duty; he did not however hold himself bound to support its principle, nor to give any particular vote on the subject to come forward on this night; for on a subject of so much importance, he should consider it criminal to come pre-determined.

He then read the petition in his place; which is as follows:

To the Right Hon. the Knights, Citizens, and Burgeses, in Parliament assembled.

The PETITION of the undersigned ROMAN CATHOLICS, on behalf of themselves and the Roman Catholics of Ireland.

Humbly sheweth,

“ THAT as the House has thought it expedient to direct their
 “ attention to the situation of the Roman Catholics of Ireland,
 “ and to a further relaxation of the penal statutes still subsisting
 “ against them, they beg leave, with all humility, to come before
 “ the House with the most heartfelt assurance of the wisdom
 “ and justice of parliament, which is at all times desirous most gra-
 “ ciously to attend to the petitions of the people; they there-
 “ fore humbly presume to submit to the House their intreaty,
 “ that they should take into their consideration whether the re-
 “ moval of some of the civil incapacities under which they la-

“bour, and the restoration the petitioners to some share in the
“elective franchise, which they enjoyed long after the revolution, will not tend to strengthen the Protestant state, add new
“vigour to industry, and afford protection and happiness to the
“Catholics of Ireland; that the petitioners refer with confidence to their conduct for a century past, to prove their uniform
“loyalty and submission to the laws, and to corroborate their solemn
“declaration, that if they obtain from the justice and benignity of parliament, such relaxation from certain incapacities,
“and a participation in that franchise which will raise them to the rank of freemen, their gratitude must be proportioned to the benefit, and that enjoying some share in the happy
“constitution of Ireland, they will exert themselves with additional zeal in its conservation.”

He then read the names signed to the petition, (those of the Roman Catholic committee) and he trusted the House would receive the petition, and decide on it with liberality.

Mr. OGLE. Sir, I do not rise to oppose the introduction of this petition, humble in its words, but bold in its tenor; but I rise to say that the claims that are every moment making on the Protestant ascendancy must be met: a line must be drawn somewhere, beyond which we must not recede, and I will caution gentlemen to be upon their guard. It is my intention, when the bill goes into committee, to move to expunge the present preamble, and introduce another for the purpose of maintaining the Protestant interests of Ireland, and to prevent these new claims which every day produces. Every thing which you grant in compliance with those claims of the Roman Catholics is just so much lost to the Protestants who have sent us here; as one, I am determined to maintain their rights; and I think it my duty, even in these critical times, to shew that I am not afraid to meet and to repel claims injurious to their interest, and destructive of their ascendancy.

Sir, I have said that this is a petition humble in its words, but bold in its tenor; and I now add, it means much more than it professes; it is signed by certain individuals, but it comes indeed from a Roman Catholic convention sitting in Dublin. It is true their claims are not so strongly expressed as when they told you “they must have every thing, and that they would persevere ‘till they had totally overthrown your ascendancy;” but such as it is, it must be met and opposed at any risk.

It is impossible to grant the Roman Catholics what they demand, if we at all regard the Protestant safety. My honourable friend will see by the debate of this night, before to-morrow’s sun shall dawn he will be convinced of what I say; I do therefore call upon gentlemen to agree to a preamble which I intend to

offer to the bill, and which will pledge them no farther than to maintain that constitution obtained for us by the virtue and valour of our great and good deliverer, King William the Third.

Mr. EGAN. Sir, I do not present this petition from any convention, or with any knowledge of its coming from a convention; however, I will not abuse the word "convention," for I recollect that a convention was the parent of the revolution.

The Hon. DENIS BROWNE (alluding to asperities from Mr. Ogle on a former night) said, when any member rose to express an opinion which happened to be against the caprice of some gentlemen, they were sure to encounter interruption and asperity. He hoped, however, that as freedom of speech in parliament was always allowed, even by the crown, no member of that House would venture to encroach on the privilege. On the part of the Roman Catholics he had to say, that in all the conversations he had ever held with men of that persuasion, and he had conversed with many of them of respectability and intelligence, not one had ever objected to the principle of Protestant ascendancy; and if he thought the bill could have such a tendency, he would not vote for it.

Mr. OGLE, conceiving the honourable member alluded to him, was constrained to avow his objections to the bill, because he conceived it injurious to the Protestant ascendancy—but with regard to extending the elective franchise to the Roman Catholics, he was convinced it could never be done, without overturning the Protestant ascendancy in every town in the kingdom.

The petition was received, read by the clerk, and ordered to lie on the table.

On the order of the day for the House to resolve itself into a committee of the whole House, to take into consideration a bill to remove certain restraints and disabilities therein mentioned, to which his majesty's subjects, professing the Popish religion, are now subject, being read; and on the Speaker putting the question, that he do now leave the chair,

Right Hon Mr. OGLE said, he rose once more, not to enter into the principle of the bill, he had already spoken his opinion on that point, but he rose to ask, whether, under all the circumstances of the case, it was proper to pass any bill at all this session in favour of Roman Catholics? Every man who heard him was, he confessed, as good a judge as he; but though he would pay attention to the petitions of Roman Catholics, approaching the

House in the modest language of humility, he never would yield when attacked under the banner of intimidation.

Mr. DENIS BROWNE. Sir, I certainly did hear the gentleman who spoke last, on a former night object to the principle of this bill, and say, he would oppose it, but I do not recollect that he assigned any reason for his intention. I do hear him this night object to it, because he thinks its purports injurious to the Protestant ascendancy, but why it will be injurious to that ascendancy he has not stated; indeed it would be difficult, at this day of the world, to reason against toleration, or at any day of the world, to find in the bill introduced matter injurious to the Protestant ascendancy.—If ever the principle of toleration, in its most liberal ample construction, was more necessary for one country than another, it is in this.

Mr. OGLE. I certainly did say, and I am still of the same opinion, that it is not in human wisdom to pass a bill granting such privileges to Roman Catholics, without injury to the Protestant ascendancy.

Mr. BROWNE. I will not urge on this question a word of abstract right; regulated society has rights superior to all natural rights, and inasmuch as regulation and good order are superior to their direct reverse, so far is practical establishment superior to the wild theories of reasoning. Ill-judging speculators, who, having no connections with society themselves, wish to strike out new systems and new worlds in which they may have such, without which there must always be a want in the mind of man. The principle is narrowed to two points:—first, whether it is the interest of this country to grant ample and full participation of its rights to the Roman Catholics; next, whether doing so, will probably be injurious to the Protestant ascendancy. Sir, this kingdom, from the conquest, has been torn by internal dissension: first, between the English invaders and Irish natives, to the reign of Elizabeth; and from that time, to the auspicious period of 1778, by the religious difference between the English Protestant and Irish Catholic. In this quarrel, more fierce and inexorable than the former, fell your national character, your trade and constitution; there was no common interest; your lands remained uncultivated; the face of your country was marked by your divisions; you were known to the world only as a British province, (as emphatically described by Lord Clarendon) “Ireland, a gulph that swallowed all that could be had, and all that could be got from England, merely to keep up the reputation of a kingdom.” Since when did you emerge from this state of desolation and rise in consequence? From the time that your religious difference abated. Since when did your

country begin to look up? Since when was your trade obtained and established? Since when were your laws respected, your property become valuable? Since when were you considered as a rising country, in the scale of the world? Since the period of seventy-two, when, by allowing the Catholics to acquire property in your country, you added them to the firm of the constitution. The effects of toleration on the prosperity of the world, is established by the experience of ages; its effects are most recent and most known in this country; and the inference that I think can be fairly and fully drawn from this statement of facts is, that it will be for the advantage of Ireland, for its parliament, by the most liberal concessions, to give this great body of people an interest in this land, that will, as I think and trust, raise us to a degree of happiness and consequence, that the most sanguine have never expected.

Sir, in my opinion, the wishes of the Roman Catholics have been misrepresented and misunderstood. They never contended with the Protestant interest for ascendancy. They are satisfied that you should enjoy that superiority of rights you are attached to, and that you have possessed since the reign of Elizabeth. They only desire of you to remove from them, in days of union and light, those restrictions that were imposed on them in the days of darkness and division, that are materially injurious to ourselves, inasmuch as they drive half the ability of the land from its service, and they do not think your doing so would be injurious to your ascendancy; and reasoning from facts, they tell you, that when they had more of power than they now demand by their petition, or have ever any way demanded, your ascendancy was preserved; when they had members in your Parliament, and elected your Parliaments, no less than thirty-nine penal laws passed against them, depriving them of all the rights of nature; driving them from habitations that their forefathers had colonized and inhabited; proscribing the priests of their religion as noxious animals; altering modes of trial in their disfavour, finally preventing them from acquiring property in their native land, and of all rights in its legislation. They tell you the land is in the hands of the Protestants, that a Protestant government and church, and your connexion with England, must preserve your ascendancy. Whatever privileges you extend to the Roman Catholics, relax the laws that prevent the exertion of the Roman Catholics in the cause of Ireland, and that exertion will be found. Experience has proved to you that their exertion will never be used but for the support of your establishment;—in times of threatened danger and invasion they have proved it—they stood foremost in the ranks of your national army, and never remembered a grievance of their own in times of common danger. I am happy to find from the side of the House the petition had been presented whence that the Roman

VOL. XII. K

Catholics have friends; all I can say is, that their exertion has been rather tardy, if it be meant to persuade the Roman Catholics that they are their friends. The bill does not go as fully as I could wish for the relief of the Roman Catholics, but its purports are benefits, and will be a bright feature in the character of Lord Westmorland's government.

Sir HERCULES LANGRISHE could not perceive either in the principle or in the tenor of the bill any ground for the objections of his right honourable friend (Mr. Ogle).—If he did not very well know the principles and sentiments of the Roman Catholics to be the reverse of those imputed to them, he never would have come forward on their behalf. He came to the House from Roman Catholics—not dictating to parliament, but professing themselves grateful for past favours, and disclaiming the presumption of pointing out to parliament any measure of relaxation, but relying on the wisdom and generosity of the House for such indulgences as it should deem consistent with the circumstances of the times, and with giving their past as a pledge of their future conduct. He desired not to put authority into their hands, but implements of industry for the improvement of our arts, and such professional privileges as should induce them to spend their lives in their native land, and devote their talents to the service of their country. He desired to level the wall of separation that divided the people from each other, to unite them in the ties of human happiness, and no longer, by refusing them the benefits of education at home, send them abroad; on these grounds he hoped the bill would no farther be opposed by his right honourable friend.

Mr. HARDY said, that he was in a great measure anticipated in what he meant to say by the honourable baronet, (Sir Hercules Langrishe) who had just sat down; he said he rose particularly then, to take notice of something that had fallen from the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Ogle) over the way, who seemed averse to proceeding on the bill at all, or to the Speaker's leaving the chair. If, said he, the bill went to an entire and abrupt relaxation of all the laws affecting the Roman Catholics, in that case he would agree with the right honourable gentleman, as to the propriety of postponing the bill till next session; for however decided his disapprobation was of the entire code of Roman Catholic laws, he would not presume on that opinion in the least, to give his assistance to a sudden breaking down of them all; on the contrary, the relaxation of those laws must be, as it has hitherto and wisely been, gradual, and any bill that went against that system, required deep consideration.—But as the present bill went only to a few propositions, to a few just and proper concessions, which, with some modifications, would in all pro-

bability meet the general concurrence of the House, in that case, and considering that the House had now sat for more than a month, and been in possession of the subject for more than three weeks, he thought that there was no reasonable ground for delay; but on the contrary, what seemed to be generously relinquished, should be speedily, though not precipitately granted.—He therefore was for going into the committee directly. The right honourable gentleman spoke of alarms and apprehensions which had gone abroad and disturbed the peace of the country; that was with him a decided reason for going into the bill; for, when he looked round him, however little disposed to any thing like adulatory language, he had no difficulty in saying, that the present House of Commons, whatever faults it might be liable to, possessed at least as much genius, good sense, and as much parliamentary knowledge and experience as any House that had preceded it, and therefore, he was not afraid, with such aids, and such qualifications, for the discussion of any bill, to meet that particular bill; it would be discussed, he hoped, with temper and fairness, and that discussion would go farther in quieting any alarms and apprehensions, than any thing else possibly could.

Another reason had been adduced against the entertaining this bill—the violent language held out by the Roman Catholics.—Mr. Hardy said he had read many of their publications; the language of some of them, and the sentiments which they contained, met his approbation.—Others he could not say so much for, they were wild, visionary, and indiscreet. But admitting that they were highly exceptionable in many respects, was the good conduct of a century to be effaced by the warm language of a day? And if the House of Commons entertained favourable sentiments of the Roman Catholics in general, could they have a stronger inducement to go into the bill than the very reason which is adduced to dissuade them from it? For if the Roman Catholics have made use of indiscreet language, or if they have fallen into bad company, who made use of this language for them, surely, in that case, it would be peculiarly incumbent on parliament to take them out of the hands of such people, as soon as possible, and by a generous and just policy towards them, to invite them to an early confidence in parliament, to the entire exclusion of all such dangerous auxiliaries, who would only injure their cause instead of supporting it. As to the particular clauses of the bill, he would, with the indulgence of the House, speak to them in the committee.

Colonel BLAQUIERE said, he thought something should be done for the Roman Catholics, and that Protestants ought to yield such things as were not unreasonable. The objects which had been introduced by the honourable baronet with such radi-

ance of intellect, in his opinion, ought to be granted by the House, as a reward for their long obedience, and for their having for so many years complied with every proposition of administration. The honourable baronet has explained the bill in such a lucid manner, that he had left little for any one else to say; this, however, he would add, that he was confident it would lead the Roman Catholic to contentment, but would not introduce him to power.

Mr. RUXTON said, he would never regulate his public duty by private feeling;—and on the present occasion he thought he could not perform that duty in any way more properly than in obstinately and vigorously opposing the bill.—For how was it the House were called on to relax the severities complained of? Was it because the Catholics had formed themselves into bodies, and signed declarations, manifestoes, and other such compositions, libellous on parliament and the constitution.—They did not solicit, as indulgence, but they demanded as right, that which could only flow as a boon from the benignity and not from the pusillanimity of parliament. They laboured, it was true, under certain disabilities, but they were such as ought to be imposed on men professing such religious sentiments. They enjoyed, nevertheless, liberty of conscience, and protection of property equally with any other class of their fellow subjects, and could have no real grievance to lament, except that of obeying the sceptre they wished to sway.

He therefore was averse to the present bill, because he thought it dangerous to the constitution, in shaking those props by which it had been so long supported.

Mr. STAPLES thought the present bill was introduced under a mandate of a British minister, and as such supported by administration here, rather than as a measure in which the sense of parliament or the Protestant interests were consulted. He wished to know if any farther concessions to Roman Catholics were intended, or if any line was to be drawn, in order to mark out the ultimate boundary of such measures—and he signified his wish of moving some strong declaratory clause in the preamble of the bill on this head.

Mr. COOTE said, that conscious as he was of the spirit of the House to resist every measure injurious to the Protestant and constitutional interests of the country, he had no objection to the committal of the bill—nor to the indulgence of the Roman Catholics in every privilege consistent with the principles of Protestant ascendancy and constitution in church and state. The Roman Catholics of rank who have come forward with an address to the Government of the country—with an address expressive of

gratitude for past benefits, and reliance on the wisdom and liberality of their Protestant countrymen for future, ought to be treated with every degree of respect and indulgence: But there are men in this country that would level all distinctions, and throw our glorious constitution in the dust; to such the slightest concession never should be made.

Mr. Secretary HOBART, in answer to what had fallen from Mr. Staples, said, he knew of no concessions intended to Roman Catholics, but what were mentioned in the bill proposed by his right honourable friend, and to those, so far as he could collect, the general sense of the House was favourable; but with respect to the measure of drawing any line for the future conduct of parliament on this topic, it was a measure he would never presume to attempt. With respect to mandates of a British minister on the subject, he knew of none.

Mr. STAPLES replied, he thought it would have been but decent on the part of Administration, to have consulted the sense of the Protestant gentlemen of the country, before such a measure was brought forward.—He thought the opinion of every Protestant of property in the country ought to have been previously consulted; but he feared it was a measure of absolute command from a British minister, and therefore hoped the spirit of the House would resist it.

Sir THOMAS OSBORNE. The bill being brought forward by the advice of that most able minister, should have his assent.

Mr. SHERIDAN. On entering parliament he formed this resolution, that no apprehension should silence, no temptation lure him; he should not, however, have spoken on the subject, in its present stage, if an answer had been given to the question put by his honourable friend, and if an honourable baronet had not said, “the bill has my approbation, because introduced under the direction of the British minister,” whom he is pleased to stile “most able.”

Sir THOMAS OSBORNE. I did not say direction, I said advice.

Mr. SHERIDAN. If I were compiling a dictionary, I think I should best explain “advice of a minister” by the single word *command*. It is but justice to the honourable mover of this bill to say every one must approve the manner in which it was introduced by him; he brought it forward with all the good sense of an experienced senator, and all the embellishments of an elegant classical mind; he was happy in the particular circumstances at-

tending it on the night of its introduction, and surely all must admire and respect the cool, but decided spirit, which seemed to possess almost every member in the House. If the agitated subject out of doors relating to the Roman Catholics, has not only been injurious to their own, but also to the public cause, by dulling the public mind to objects of great magnitude; if so circumstanced, Administration has obtained what is called a quiet session; still he could congratulate his country on some discoveries derived from her present situation. It is now apparent, that no body of men, however composed, directed or advised, can with success dictate to the legislature: the more turbulent their resolves, the weaker will be their effect: and it is now apparent, that there are questions on which no government, however strong, or however inclined, dare venture. He said, he spoke in general, and did not apply it now; but if, in a future session of parliament, some Scotch secretary in England, envious of the tranquil state of this country, and even of her slow growing prosperity, if jealous on the idea of Ireland's imperial crown, his country having only a moiety in one, he should see in perspective (a paradox in expression, but a certainty in event) a union produced by dissention; if in a future session such a minister should send his cardinal legate, or nuncio, to negotiate with the great body of the Roman Catholics of this kingdom, who are at present politically separated from their political brethren by the laws and policy of the state, if this envoy should offer this great body of the people to Government, upon the small sacrifice of the Protestant interest; if this envoy should insinuate, "if you do not receive them, opposition perhaps will;" why, this ambassador extraordinary might depart unmolested by a chief justice's warrant, or an attorney general's information; there being no danger in the business, might justify the inattention of the law officers; he might depart contrary to his mission, in peace, to Paris; to that beautiful meteor the queen of France; to Coblenz; to marshal Broglie, or the pope. The Roman Catholics of Ireland may now learn, that it is to the wisdom and liberality of the Protestants of Ireland they ought to look, and that foreign or ministerial negotiation must be ever suspicious and never successful; every man must agree, that they are entitled to every benefit and advantage compatible with the preservation of the Protestant ascendancy; but as he knew "Protestant ascendancy," might be used perhaps by some in a very narrow, and by others in a too enlarged sense, he begged leave to submit his idea of Protestant ascendancy to the House: by Protestant ascendancy he meant, a Protestant king, to whom only being Protestant we owed allegiance; a Protestant house of peers, composed of Protestant lords spiritual in Protestant succession, of Protestant lords temporal, with Protestant inheritance, and a Protestant house of commons, elected and deputed by Pro-

testant constituents; in short, a Protestant legislative, a Protestant judicial, and a Protestant executive, in all and each of their varieties, degrees, and gradations. He knew there were some who would stifle this prejudice; it might be so, but it had grown up with him, and it was the best conclusion his understanding could enable him to make, from no inattentive consideration on the subject. There were some, he was sorry for it, who think religion a prejudice, and he had read works where the authors would seriously inculcate this doctrine, that a religion of the state was an idle idea; among the splendid impositions of Gibbon the historian, who sacrifices much to composition and style of expression, we find "Rome become the common temple of her subjects, and all the gods of mankind were free of the city," what kind of body politic a corporation of gods would make in any state, and how an aristocracy of deities might be relished in a republic, is a pleasant speculative subject. At this day he believed the best, the most wise and most moral opinion is, that religion is essential in society, and where there are several sects, one must necessarily be paramount; the present bill invited no further observation; there were four propositions; three were innocent, perhaps desirable; one was striking, he meant the bar, on which he had not yet a decided opinion; but in committee it would be coolly and fully investigated.

Mr. MICHAEL SMYTH. Relaxed and exhausted from a variety of causes, which it would be arrogant in me to trouble the House by stating, it was not my intention to have obtruded upon you this night, but from the turn which the debate has latterly taken; I feel it my duty, before it concludes, to solicit the permission of the House to submit to them very briefly my humble thoughts upon the principle of the present bill. From the line of my profession I have, Sir, upon several occasions, been forced into an intimate consideration of that code of laws distinguished by the name of the popery laws; by which means I became enabled to form, and am, I think, now not altogether incompetent to deliver a tolerably adequate opinion of their nature and their character. Sir, I never read them but with horror, nor reflected upon them but with a mingled sensation of sorrow and of shame. I hailed the relaxation of them as the auspicious dawn, and I looked, and do look, to their utter and final abrogation, as to the meridian glory of my country's welfare and prosperity.

Impress with these sentiments, I could not but rejoice when the honourable baronet, who first moved this bill, introduced it into the House; and I instantly determined, if necessary, to give it my feeble, though best support; while at the same time I fondly hoped that being, as I deemed it, in its nature highly expedient, in its concessions extremely moderate, and in its con-

sequences likely to be eminently salutary, it would not only escape every thing like angry opposition, but pass into a law in all the dignity of unanimous and universal approbation.

The objects which this bill embraces are but few; it proposes to admit our Roman Catholic brethren into the profession and practice of the law in all its various departments; to enable them also to establish literary seminaries and academies for the instruction and education of their own youth; and to permit intermarriages of Protestants and Roman Catholics; with some subordinate provisions, on which I mean not at present to trouble the House with my observations. As to the first and second of these measures, justice and humanity, as well as sound policy, forbid all resistance to them. We all know that arts and sciences, like soils, are best improved by culture; nor is the prosperity of a nation more marked by the number and industry of its citizens, than the perfection of science is insured by the multitude and competition of its students and its votaries. Just Heaven! Sir, is the "ample page of knowledge" to be withheld for ever from our Roman Catholic fellow citizens? As to them, are the sacred fountains of science and of truth to be for ever dried up? Is more, much more than half the genius of the land to be condemned to pine and languish in obscurity for ever? for ever to

" ————— blush unseen,

" And walle its sweetness on the desert air."

Or is to be for ever banished from our hospitable shores, to seek a wretched asylum in some distant land, until happily at length impelled and elevated by its native energy, it may serve to dignify some foreign court, or to illuminate some other hemisphere? Forbid it, Heaven! Forbid it the justice and humanity of my country! Forbid it every motive, and every principle that ought to sway the human heart, or guide the human intellect! No, Sir, we will admit, cheerfully admit our Roman Catholic brethren into the profession of the law; we will receive them with open arms; we will enable and encourage them to qualify for that important station; we will contend and struggle with them in the honest and honourable pursuits of fortune and of fame; and if vanquished in the strife, we will join with the surrounding world in admiring those talents which, though we could not equal, we dared to emulate.

With respect to the intermarriages of Protestants and Roman Catholics, I feel assured it is a measure that can never meet resistance within those walls. In a country eminently distinguished by the beauty of its women and gallantry of its men, shall it be adjudged criminal to admire that form, whose

" ————— Every step is grace,

" And every gesture dignity and love!"

Shall it be deemed a breach of allegiance to pay homage to beauty? Shall loyalty be set at variance with nature? Shall our gracious sovereign be forced to dispute titles with the "mighty monarch of the human heart?" And shall love in Ireland; shall love, be made little less than high treason by law? Why, Sir, the punishment of Tantalus was mercy to this. Such horrid laws find their remedy in their importance; their cruelty defeats and destroys their effect, and they become inoperative, because they are unnatural. Where God and nature enjoin admiration and esteem, it is vain, as well as sinful, in law to prohibit union. The instinctive passions of the human heart will force their way in spite of every cruel effort to check or to subdue them; and when indulged, when virtuously and honourably indulged, gracious Heaven! shall all their holy joys, shall all their sacred and mysterious raptures be, by a merciless law, converted into pains and penalties? Shall the nuptial torch serve only to light its unoffending, yet unhappy, votaries to their temporal undoing? And shall the doating husband be forced to contemplate, in the person of his lovely wife, the fatal drag, cast upon his honest ambition; the beauteous, innocent, pitiable burthen that is to weigh him down in life, and mar his fortune and his fame for ever.

Away with such abominable laws! Away with such savage legislation; and away, for ever away with such mischievous and such merciless policy. Let us, I conjure the House by the sacred names of charity and benevolence! Let us maintain the cause and assert the honest, virtuous claims of nature. Let us abjure all tyranny over the human heart, and vindicate and protect these amiable and irresistible attachments which are the prime sources, not only of all domestic happiness, but also of all national strength, prosperity, and glory. Let us once more throw wide the golden gates of hallowed love, and let hymeneal songs and the sympathetic murmurs of united hearts render "our groves harmonious."

I fear I have trespassed on the attention of the House too long, and shall therefore hasten to conclude; but before I resume my seat, let me in the most solemn, yet in the most suppliant manner, entreat of those gentlemen who may be apprehensive of the consequence of the present bill, that while they regard, with a steady eye, the Protestant interest, they do not overlook the Roman Catholic virtue; that is, in their anxiety to preserve what is called the Protestant ascendancy, they forget not to alleviate the Roman Catholic grievances; so that while one party shall be happy in the possession of prerogative, the other may be contented in the participation of privilege; always remembering that kindness on the one hand, will not, cannot fail of producing gratitude on the other; until, after a lengthened period of mutual harmony, cordiality, and affection, that happy

moment, so much, so devoutly to be wished for by every real friend of this country, shall arrive, when the divided names of Protestant and Roman Catholic shall be heard no more, but mellowed and melted away—shall finally lose themselves in the more endearing, glorious, and divine appellations of friend, brother, and fellow Christian.

Colonel HUTCHINSON. As other gentlemen have spoken at large on the principle of this bill, I shall take the liberty of doing the same. This great subject, requires unequivocal, and decisive language: I shall speak my sentiments upon it with the utmost submission, but with the utmost firmness; I may value your applause; but I should be unworthy of a seat in this House, if I could fear your censure, when I acted in conformity to the dictates of my judgment, after the best consideration I could give an important question; the opinions which on this night I shall mention, I adopted in early youth; my manhood has confirmed them; I am confident they are founded on the immutable principles of truth and reason; I shall therefore never cease to cherish them 'till I cease to exist.

Unfortunately for this country, those jealousies between Catholics and Protestants, which every good man hoped were buried in oblivion, are now rising again; I accuse no man either within these walls or without them, but I implore the attention of you all, and trust that this will prove a contest, not of passion, but of reason; not of prejudice, but of argument. Fears have been mentioned in this capital, and in this House, of dangers threatening the Protestant ascendancy; these sentiments have extended themselves to the utmost corners of the island, and have been reverberated back again to us. Relying on the wisdom of this House, and on the moderation of the Protestants of Ireland, I will hope that this heated collision between the constituent and the representative body, shall never create a flame which may devour and consume this ill-fated country. I certainly have to regret that this great subject has not been canvassed with that temper which the investigation of truth and fair discussion naturally require; but as I do not feel these apprehensions, and cannot see any danger which could arise to the Protestant establishment from the further emancipation of the Catholic body, I must beg leave to state my reasons why I am of this opinion, and to answer several objections which have been made to the adoption of such a measure.

I shall vote for the committal of this bill; the only objection that I can have to it is, that it does not go far enough; it embraces four objects, the right of taking apprentices, and of keeping schools, the power of intermarriages, and of being called to the bar; I really thought that a bill so harmless, so innocent, so

inoffensive; a bill which gives so little, and that little so reasonable, might have passed into a law without objection and without debate. The ingenuity of gentlemen would probably have been at a loss, if the favourite topic of the Protestant ascendancy had not suggested itself. In this manner of reasoning, I acknowledge there is much philosophy and depth of thought: for the Protestant mechanic will assuredly find the Protestant ascendancy in the monopoly of trade; and the Protestant school-master will use his learning to discover this same ascendancy in the monopoly of teaching. Beauty, honour, virtue, truth, might possibly in the person of a woman and a wife convince a Protestant husband, that though a Catholic was not to be trusted with power or office, a person of that religion might constitute the joy, the pride, the happiness, the consolation of domestic life. If the law were a profession of less liberality, the Protestant barrister might search for this same ascendancy, in the depression of the industry and the abilities of his Catholic brother. Certainly the preservation of this ascendancy is the material object to which every other consideration must be sacrificed; yet still I am not able to divest my mind entirely of the idea, that the general prosperity of the great body of the people is something: impressed with this opinion I would wish to annihilate monopoly; because I know it makes trade droop, I would give every man the benefit that might accrue from his superior knowledge, and promote learning by competition, because it is with difficulty to be found in this land; it has never taken root, but has languished for want of encouragement, or sought refuge in foreign and more congenial climates. I would suffer Protestants and Catholics to intermarry, because though the offices, the honours, the power, the authority of the state, ought certainly to be in the hands of the few, yet I have heard and read that it is the union, and not the separation, the agreement, and not the dissention of the many, which must constitute the strength of the nation. I would open the bar to them, because I would wish to call Catholic eloquence to the support of Protestant liberty; great is the succour, great is the security, which countries derive from the possession of men of talents; they are their natural guardians, protectors and defenders; in bad times they shield the people against the encroachments and corruptions of bad governments, or interfere between themselves and their prejudices.

I hear with amazement the daily cant that the Catholic is not persecuted, because he enjoys his liberty and his property in as much security as the Protestant; but in my opinion every disability for religious belief is persecution. It is buzzed in my ear, that every man in this House is as tolerant as I am, and that it is a contest for power, and not for religion; it matters little to the world whether you change the name of things or not, provided the effect still continues the same; it may be contest for power,

but it is founded on religious difference, you may argue round the circle, but I still bring you back to the point of religion. For my part, I have not a mind sufficiently expanded to comprehend the force of this reasoning, I cannot conceive the absolute necessity that Protestants should exterminate Catholics, or Catholics Protestants, may they not flourish together and divide this their country between them? Deny the position, and you blaspheme the common Father of both; I do allow that all these contests were originally contests of power, the reformation was opposed by most of the sovereigns of Europe, who thought it dangerous to their power that their subjects should use the light of their own reason, and that all habits of discussion were inimical to despotism; the clergy availed themselves of their influence over a laity, ignorant and superstitious, and lighted up the fires of persecution, not because they feared God or hated man, but because they loved power.

It appears at first not a little surprising, that a difference of opinion among divines, whether a text of scripture ought to be construed figuratively or literally, should have created such animosities, the absurdity of such a cause of contest is lost in the immensity of mischief it has done; for think as you please, and say what you will, this is the difference, the real and substantial difference which has caused that immense separation between the Catholic and Protestant church, which nor time, nor reason, nor philosophy have yet been able to close.

The oppression of Catholic governments on their subjects who do not profess the religion of the state, has always been the object of the reprobation of the Protestants, and too often of their imitation. England has shared in this disgrace, but you have exceeded all other nations, your old sanguinary code still remains on your statute book; inspect it again, if the tear of humanity shall not blot the pages and conceal from your sight the disgrace of your ancestors, and the oppressions and calamities of their fellow-subjects, and then if you are inclined for panegyric and self-applause, you may boast of the mercy and long suffering of the Protestant religion, but if you have been tolerant, I do not know what persecution is; you refuse the Catholic toleration for his religion, arms for his personal defence, the right of purchase in the country in which he had been born and bred, and any landed security for his money; when with his industry cramped, his person in danger, and his conscience in fetters, he retired to his house for comfort and relief, what were his feelings, what were his apprehensions? He found that the bloody spirit of your inquisitorial legislation had entered before him, the suspicion which you had created dashed every joy of his life, and embittered every prospect of futurity; in his friend or his servant he saw an informer, in his wife the mother of him who might become his bitterest enemy and despoiler; the usual connections and gradations

of human life were reversed ; the parent was made to depend on the child, and not the child on the parent ; the fondest parent surveyed with doubt and melancholy the opening talents of his offspring ; he knew that if his son should prove valiant or enterprising, his country rejected his services, and that he must either pine at home in inactivity, or live an exile in a foreign country ; if he should be wise or eloquent, he could not raise his voice in those very courts of justice which were to determine on his property, his honour, his liberty, and his life, without a renunciation of the faith of his ancestors ; so that a father in the bitterness of his anguish, was obliged to hope that his son should prove an idler, lest he should become an exile, or an apostate. I shall be told that the enlightened wisdom of a late parliament did away some of those obnoxious laws ; but it ought to diminish the exultation of your triumph, when you recollect that this repeal was opposed with much obstinacy and spirit, and that the downfall of the Protestant religion and of the Protestant establishment was predicted, as soon as the Catholic body only should be restored to what will now appear to you to be the common and natural rights of men. When, therefore, such has been your conduct, and such your legislation, you must acknowledge that persecution has been, and still is established by law amongst you. After such a degrading confession, is it any palliation to your offences, that other religions have adopted a conduct more ferocious than yours ? have you no other defence to make for the honour of yourselves and your ancestors, for the wisdom of your Government, for the dignity of your parliament, for the justice of your nation, than that others have been more wicked than you ? Some of those nations have made an honourable reparation to the cause of injured humanity ; if you followed their example when they were wrong, you ought not to reject it now that they are right. The history of Christianity has not been very honourable to the professors of that religion : all sects of Christians have been in their turns persecutors ; they can only dispute concerning the quantum of mischief they have done.

In order originally to justify this penal code, it was found necessary to represent the Catholics as the enemies of civil liberty, and the constitution ; as the adherents of a detested family ; as holding doctrines erroneous, dangerous and wicked ; all which circumstances rendered it unsafe for a Protestant government to place any confidence in them ; you cannot now accuse them of holding doctrines dangerous to liberty, or of being enemies to the constitution ; after you adopted them at Dungannon, after you enrolled them among your volunteers, after you marched embodied together, to commerce and to constitution, whether in later times they have been the adherents of the expelled families, their conduct for a century, during which period two rebellions raged in England, best can answer ; whether they ever held, or continued

to hold, these wicked, dangerous and erroneous positions; such as, that faith was not to be kept with heretics, that persons might be absolved from their oath, and that princes excommunicated by the pope might be deposed and murdered by their subjects; let your wisdom, your candour and your truth pronounce, after you have considered that these doctrines were never received or acknowledged by any Catholic church, and have lately been solemnly denied, rejected and abjured by the principal universities of Europe, by those of that persuasion in England, and not now maintained by any, the most groveling papist.

It is stated, if not as a crime, at least as an insuperable objection to Catholics, that their ancestors once possessed the government, and the property of this country, during that period your candour must induce you to acknowledge that they often resisted the encroachments of England, and endeavoured to assert and maintain the independence of their legislature; the rebellion of forty-one, and the revolution, deprived them of all power, and in a great degree, with some few exceptions, of property; the power and the property were transferred to Protestant hands; it is argued, that if the Catholics should ever acquire sufficient weight in the government, they will overturn this settlement, and restore this property to the original proprietors; this fear appears to me to be imaginary, when all the circumstances are weighed without passion, and without prejudice. The first of these forfeitures is in the possession of Protestants for near a century and a half, the latter a century; the families of many of the original proprietors are extinct, or their representatives foreigners, residing in foreign countries; the Catholics themselves have purchased some of these estates, and will probably in course of time purchase many more of them; they have lent their money on this security; it never can be the interest of the great body of that persuasion to excite a general convulsion, in which their fortunes and the fruits of their industry might be swallowed up, solely for the purpose of benefiting the few. A nation is not to be put in motion, except by grievances which are severely felt by the whole mass of the community, and by causes which are of general, not of partial operation; the great share of property would still be in the Protestant hands, and property gives power; the disposal of office would still be in the Protestant government, and office gives influence, the command of the Irish army would still belong to you; the navy, the land force, the formidable and illustrious names of Britain, together with ten millions of Protestants would still be at your back; let me ask you then, is your situation so critical and so dangerous, that you dare not be just?

It is possible, I allow, that the hard necessity of the times, the prevalence of bigotry and superstition, and the unenlightened spirit of the age, which rejected all principles of toleration, might once have palliated those laws; but if they were necessary in a

period of comparative darkness, in a period of discord, revolution and blood, ought they to be continued when these causes, which originally might have justified them, have long since ceased to operate? Posterity, when it shall weigh in a just and impartial balance, the merits and demerits of the different generations which have gone before them, shall consider the enacting of this code, as the misfortune of your ancestors, but the continuance of it, as your disgrace. He may be a zealous Protestant, but he is not a zealous advocate for truth, who is unwilling to acknowledge, that the sentiments of mankind on the subject of religious differences have materially changed, and that all the circumstances attending these contests in Ireland, are exactly the reverse of what they were. The spirit of the Catholic religion is softened and refined; the influence of the pope, feeble, as the feeble and decrepid hand that wields it; his power overthrown in France, tottering in Germany, resisted in Italy, and formidable no where. The succession is now undisputed, all ranks and religions vying in their attachment to the present family on the throne; we are not now cursed with a pretender to our crown, who was supported by a great body of adherents in England, and in Scotland, and by the whole force of the most mighty monarch in Europe. In some sequestered corner of the land, among the old women of the island, there may possibly still exist a Jacobite. Danger no longer threatens you; peace smiles upon you; why then do you still continue to sound the trumpet of war?

Examine well your own situation, and the situation of surrounding Europe. Reflect that this is an age of reason; men seriously consider and speculate upon the various duties and obligations of government; old establishments are no longer to be defended by their rust and antiquity, but by truth and reason; try your penal code by this criterion, and he must be stupid indeed, who is not able to find an answer for all your assertions; your clamours and your prejudices, your high sounding expressions and your tones of authority may frighten the timid, but they will neither silence the bold, nor convince the reasonable. I am told that under this system of government, the country has thriven, and is still in a state of rapid improvement and prosperity. True it is, the vices of your political constitution have not been able entirely to blast the gifts of Providence, they have only checked their growth, and retarded their progress; but a people possessing such energy of character as to be able to fight up against such oppressions, surely deserve more favourable treatment. Are they unfit for liberty, because slavery itself has only been able to deface, and not entirely to destroy the native and inherent vigour of their minds? There is, I suppose, no man who now contends that a Catholic is not as fit for, and does not love liberty as much as a Protestant? But it has been said, that the Irish Catholic is a bigot, ignorant and superstitious, who does not deserve freedom, and who ought not to be

trusted with power. You of the Protestant ascendancy breathe the same air, and inhabit the same country, and you are wise, free, and enlightened; from whence then does the degradation of the Catholic proceed? It cannot be from his religion, for the same cause would operate to the same effect every where; and you must know that liberty, and the principles of government, are now well understood in Catholic countries. This supposed degradation must then have arisen from that system of law which so many of you are now willing to defend; let the Irish legislator descend from his tribunal, and exclaim to his subjects, I have succeeded in disgracing and debasing you, I will continue the visitation, and punish you for crimes of my own commission.

I did hope that religious persecution, like every other periodical frenzy of the human mind, had spent its force, and was passing away; its progress has been cruel, ferocious and bloody; its duration six centuries! Philosophers in every country, together with America, Germany and France, have thought such a progress and such a duration were sufficiently degrading to the human character, and have therefore for ever chained to the ground this monster, which perverted a religion of peace, desolated the fairest provinces of the earth, and rendered man a wild beast; yet even in Europe, in enlightened Europe, this system has still its advocates in a country of liberty, among that very generation of men who established the independence of their legislature, and the freedom of their commerce. This inconsistency ought to make you blush, if religious zeal can blush: What! do you still cling to those terrible prejudices, which manacled your commerce, enslaved your people, and degraded your parliament? What! are you willing to shut your eyes against your own experience, and to remain untaught by the wretched history of your wretched country? Do you not know, that it was your own internal divisions that first promoted a foreign usurpation; which caused the degradation, the oppression, the misery of this noble island, for which God has done so much and man has done so little? Reflect on the want of skill in your manufacturer, on the small capital of your farmer; mark the appearance of your miserable peasant, see the wretched hovel in which he dwells; survey your country, ponder on the repeated insults offered to Ireland, on her profligate parliaments, on her commerce, once annihilated, on her constitution held in chains; examine well both the past and the present, and then if you are wise, you will find those effects accounted for, by the divisions which distracted you. If you are honest you will seize this opportunity of doing them away for ever; you will then, after the lapse of so many ages, become again one nation; for the Catholic will forget to be a bigot as soon as the Protestant shall cease to be a persecutor.

On the best consideration that I have been able to give this the most important of all subjects, I do not hesitate to declare, that

you must prepare your minds for a radical reformation. I do not say exactly the manner or the time when, but sooner or later this system must fall to the ground, oppressed by its own weight. This necessity arose with the establishment of the independence of your legislature; you are willing after you have become a kingdom to cling and adhere to that narrow and wretched form of government which cursed a humiliated and distracted province. The thing is impossible. You are in the middle between the Irish Catholic and English Protestant, you must either adopt the one, or unite with the other; you must either renounce your prejudices, or abdicate your legislative supremacy. Did you only seize on the scepter of dominion, in order to exhibit yourselves as a spectacle to the world, and prove that such feeble hands could not wield it? Would you rather go from nation to nation, begging a master, than form a compact of strength and perpetual peace with your Irish brother?

I have now stated to you my opinion on this question; a question of such magnitude that he must be a dishonest man indeed, who could utter any sentiments that were not really his own; and he must be more than a coward, who, feeling strongly, should not dare to express himself in the same manner. I have done so; I thought it my absolute and bounden duty; I know your fears, and I laugh at them; I am convinced of your prejudices, and I despise them; I cannot think of putting the fleeting opinions of any body of men, however respectable in competition with the dictates of my conscience, and the sacred interest of this my country.

I appeal from yourselves to your cooler reflections, in moments of less irritation: for my part I cannot see the prosperity of Ireland but in the union of all its inhabitants, and the union of all its inhabitants but in the adoption of the Catholic body; if it can arise from any other circumstances, convince me of it by arguments strong and irresistible; I will then acknowledge my error, and my renunciation of the principle shall be strong, explicit, decided, and sincere as the avowal.

HON. GEORGE KNOX. I offer myself to your notice, Sir, in the humble hope that the consideration which I have given this subject may be of some service to the cause which I support. I know that in the cause of truth, the weakest abilities will prosper, and I believe that such is the cause in which I now engage. Sure I am, that since the hour I had first the honour of a seat within this house, to the present moment, no question so extensive in its operation, and so important in its consequences, in which interests more various were involved, and in which prospects more distant and obscure were to be penetrated, ever came into discussion here. To determine it, we must peruse the pages of the future by meditating the records of the past; we must inquire

into the nature of man as an individual, and as a member of society, and see where the appetites of the savage stimulate the habits of the citizen. Before this question every struggle of party, every exertion of a partial and local ambition, every effort at a vain and temporary popularity, is forgot: over this question the nation does not sleep, nor the parliament slumber; not the arts of the rhetorician to adorn it, nor the powerful appeals of the orator to gain it audience; It comes forward in its simplest garb, and the eyes of the multitude are upon it.

It is useful in the investigation of a great subject to lay down certain principles, as axioms, by which the person who discusses them is to be governed, and beyond which he ought not to wander. Now I discover such a principle in the muniments of our constitution, and to that principle I adhere—connection with Great Britain. And I add another principle, as a corollary to that—Protestant ascendancy. For I say, as long as Great Britain remains attached to a Protestant establishment, and a Protestant crown, so long must we, being Protestants, remain the ruling power here, or the connection is dissolved. That is, so long must such a paramount authority be vested in us as shall be a security for the permanence of our Protestant monarchy. Shall we call a Catholic parliament, and how long shall we be without a Catholic king? Can the legislative be of one faith and the executive be of another? and, if they can, is it possible that they should co-operate in the support of the same ecclesiastical establishment? No, Sir, the Catholics are but men, and is it not the nature of man that desire should grow with gratification, and ambition with power? They are men attached to a particular worship, and is it not the nature of religion to urge its votaries to the elevation of its ministers? Let the Catholics endeavour to persuade themselves of the contrary; they cannot persuade us. What then must be the objects of our deliberations? Conformity, civil and religious.

And how is conformity to be obtained? I will not quote to you the words of Montesquieu, nor the language of every writer on toleration; I need not tell you that Christianity flourished under contempt and grew up under oppression; I need not tell you that the Protestant faith was generated in the fires of intolerance, and that the ashes of her martyrs fertilized the soil of reformation. We know, without the aid of history or appealing to any authority, save the feelings of our own breasts, that there is an elastic principle in the mind of man that rises against pressure, and that to oppose prejudice by force, is to strengthen and condense it. How has that principle operated here? A hard and cruel necessity obliged our ancestors to consider their countrymen as their enemies, and to load them with those fetters which suspicion, hatred and timidity have ready forged for discomfited ambition, and half-smothered, but not extinguished, revenge.

What was the consequence? The Catholics, finding the arms of the Protestants folded, and that their hearts were closed against them, resorted to foreign powers for protection, and to each other for sympathy. They became a strong, because a united party; and they were united because they were oppressed. They found a melancholy pleasure in telling over their wrongs, and reviling the authors of them. They felt the necessity, as well as the pleasure, of mutual connection and support. They became as one family, united in one interest, and kept together as well by sentiments of affection, as by principles of honour and shame. When time had, in some degree, softened the rancour, and experience had confuted the suspicions of our fathers, we find them opening their eyes on their situation, and perceiving that a country thus disunited could never become rich or powerful. They saw the mischief, but they were either not sufficiently enlightened, or too much governed by their antipathies, to see, or employ the remedy. They desired a unity of religion, and what were the means which they adopted? The most base and barbarous that ever entered into the heart of man to conceive. They bribed the son to betray the father; and in his way to the temple of the true God, they made him trample on the Author of his existence.

Policy so cruel and unnatural met with the success which it deserved, and which might have been expected. A few abandoned wretches came forth loaded with infamy and execration, and offered up the sacrifice of impiety at the shrine of our holy religion. But the body remained whole, and the more strong and the more healthful from the separation of its polluted members. At length the time came when the patient loyalty, and the silent sufferings of the Catholics were to be acknowledged and rewarded. They received indeed but a tardy acknowledgment and a penurious reward. But much was done when a beginning was made, and in the twilight of toleration which glimmered in 1778, you might have seen that sun which rose in 1782, and which is now ascending to the meridian. New principles then began to establish themselves; coercion gave way to conciliation, we held out hope where we had formerly held out terror. We allowed the Catholics to realize the rewards of their industry, and thereby we encouraged them to be industrious. But we did more, for we attached them to the laws by which they are now protected, whereas before we estranged them from the laws by which they had before been coerced. From that moment they began to love their country and its constitution. From the moment you planted toleration in the land, the weeds of bigotry and disaffection rotted from its surface. The same moment that you took off the bonds of oppression, you broke the bands of union; and now that you are disinterring the political corpse of the Catholic people, and exposing it to that air which you yourselves have exclusively breathed, behold it crumbling into

dust! Where is now that union amongst them which you once so justly feared? See them already discovering the first symptoms of free sentiments by the parties into which they disjoint themselves. See the [Lord Kenmare] virtuous and the venerable, and the [Mr. Bellew] learned and the liberal, and the host of illustrious names that accompany them separating from the partizans of sedition, and preparing, (to use the words of a great man now no more) [Mr. Flood] "to embosom themselves in the state." The honourable baronet, therefore, presents to us this bill with the confidence that experience has ratified its principles, and I believe I may add, with the confidence that your suffrage will confirm it. You see what we had to encounter, and the arms which we successfully used. Bigotry, we attacked with toleration; alienation with concession; and the spirit of party with the spirit of ambition. Look through this bill, and see whether it does not use the same weapons against the same adversaries! To bigotry it opposes education, to alienation it opposes intermarriage, and to ambition it offers the honourable profession of the bar. It goes on encouraging industry, by taking off the restriction on commerce. And by diluting the spirit of party, and by infusing the stimulant of ambition, it renders palatable the cup of conformity; I do not mean, Sir, to enter very minutely into the different clauses of the bill, but I cannot avoid making a few observations on each.

The bar, Sir, I shall not make an unqualified panegyric on that profession, well knowing, that an unqualified panegyric is as absurd and feeble, as an unqualified invective is absurd and malignant. Besides, Sir, I do not rejoice in any particular success to stimulate me to extravagant praise, neither do I rankle under the recollection of any peculiar failure to goad me to extravagant abuse. The bar, Sir, is a profession in which, superior to all others, liberality of sentiment and rectitude of conduct prevail. The mind of a lawyer, minute and laborious in its researches, and cool and unbiassed in its decisions, must necessarily be detached from prejudice. His practice, accustoming him to view the actions of men in various lights, to see where error is mistaken for guilt, when motives of revenge pass for generous indignation, and the cravings of avarice for the calls of justice: He learns to be cautious in his judgments and liberal in his constructions. It cannot be denied that in a profitable calling there must be many temptations to wrong, and that many fall victims to those temptations, and it too often happens that an undismayed countenance, and an unfeeling heart raise men to an eminence in that profession, to which no man of virtue and no man of taste can endure to see them elevated. But the bar, keeping as it does a watchful and scrupulous eye over the conduct of its brethren, distinguishes meanness and extortion by contemptuous neglect; and no place better exemplifies than the Four Courts, that solitude and shame are the companions of guilt.

But why should I dwell on the characters of the profession, when I may talk to you of their actions? What is their conduct now? Are they engaged in a selfish opposition to a measure by which so many of them must suffer? No. They support it. Do they wish for a monopoly of the profits of the bar? No, they throw open its doors, despising every gain but what arises from the honourable contention of industry and talents. With such sentiments as these, and with such frequent and luminous applications of them, they need not fear reproach; for the more they are calumniated, the more lasting will be their praise. Neither let them fear that the just objects of their ambition will be withheld from them, since they see, in a recent example, that the same modest talents, the same extensive learning, the same dignity of temper and inflexible integrity, which mark a man out as a fit dispenser of justice to a well regulated state, recommend him to the government and place him [Counsellor William Downes] on the bench. Such a profession, therefore, it cannot be much mischief to the cause of conformity to offer to the Catholics. Their prejudices it will remove, by its study and practice; and their antipathies it will remove, by their introduction to a Protestant society. It places an object of ambition before their eyes in the bench, attainable only by conformity, and it abates the impediment of shame, by removing them from the body to which they formerly belonged.

As to marriage, the same principles apply, and the same motives urge. Every passion of the human heart is a material for the mould of the legislator as for the observation of the philosopher. If he wishes to smooth the asperities, and soften the acrimony of society, he will seek for that passion which all animated nature acknowledges, but which, united to taste, and blended with sympathy, becomes in the human breast the source of every benevolent and every generous feeling. He will temper its violence by the solemnity of religion. He will restrain its excursions within the limits of law. I speak not of that passion which hurries intemperance into the arms of prostitution, still less of those loathsome vices which sacrifice youth at the altar of decay, and sling contempt upon those grey hairs on which we should only look with veneration: I speak of that sentiment which unites soul to soul, and makes the heart expand beneath modest bonds of sacred wedlock. I speak of that sentiment which our rude ancestors scorned to use, but which we are not ashamed or fearful to apply. By resorting to it we shall not only subdue the violence of individual prejudice, but we shall unite families now separated, and, what is of no little moment, we shall efface the distinction of names.

By the intermarriage of Protestant and Papist, therefore, we unite them more closely to ourselves and, above all, we break that bond of union which linked them to each other, and give room for the operations of strong passions to excite them to conform.

With regard to education, I am pleased with what is done ; but, I confess, I wish the mover of the bill had gone farther. I should have wished, that some institutions were contrived for the education of priests, and that Catholics as well as Protestants, might terminate their progress through the university, by the honour of a degree. But as it fell from persons of high authority, before this debate came on, that my idea might be accomplished by other means, I shall at present say no more about it. Permit me now to say a word or two in answer to those objections which have been urged against this measure.

The objections indeed are so inconsistent and contradictory that they generally refute one another. But some observations have dropped in the course of the debate to which it is necessary to allude. We have heard "that present concessions will be no obstacle to future demands." Now if demands be an evil, I ask whether we are most likely to incur that by compliance or by refusal? And if they can neither be discouraged by the one or by the other, as I believe, we must then apply to the usual remedies in cases of compulsion, patience and contempt, and we must at last resort to that conduct which best becomes a legislature ; that is, we must give what it may be right for us to give, and we must withhold what it would be wrong in us to bestow. But says my learned friend, at the other side of the House, " we have been governed in this concession by our fears." I admit that the counsels of folly and timidity are the same. I admit, though an action be ever so just, and wise, in itself, yet if it appears to be the result of motives rather of weakness than of wisdom, the action will be contaminated by its source, and instead of diffusing benefit, disseminate destruction. But, Sir, did my learned friend examine into our actions before he decided upon our motives? How do they speak? The turbulent and clamorous ; that is, those who might have been supposed objects of apprehension, we have treated with proud denial and contempt. To the more reasonable and moderate requisitions of the humble, we have listened. Those whom we might have refused without a murmur, we have gratified, and those who affected the language of intimidation, we hunted from our doors with scorn and reproof : could a more exact line be drawn between liberality and meanness? But there are others who do justice to our motives, but are fearful for appearances, and who say, that we ought to reserve our bounty till it shall seem not to be extorted.—I trust in God I may never see arguments such as these prevail in the grand council of the nation! But if they should have weight, then I say that this is the time to act. Yes, Sir, if ever there was a time when parliament would demonstrate its magnanimity, it is now. If ever there was a time when it could shew itself superior to the little passions of little minds, to vulgar pride and feminine resentment, it is now. If ever there was a time when it could shew itself superior to those

assurances to which it has lately listened with exemplary patience, it is now. This is the time in which it should be proud to move towards the public good, without the haste and hurry of passion, or the languor of indifference. This is the moment to prove that the attacks of its revilers are untrue, and that the only trade of parliament, is the commerce of benevolence and justice.

That a part of the Catholics have been indiscreet, I allow. That a part of them have lately been seduced into measures of madness and conceit, I allow; but, that those measures should excite any serious alarm, or defeat the reasonable desires of the deserv- ing, I cannot admit: I cannot admit that the speculative sedition of the day, and of a few, should outweigh the practical loyalty of millions for a century; or that we should be apprehensive of sentiments, now that the empire is most flourishing, which we desired when it was most feeble, and more particularly when I perceive that one injudicious friend, or one insidious adversary, may, at any time, excite those clamours which will thus be a perpetual impediment to the liberality of parliament. But, I confess, there is a point of violence, to which it would be apathy and imprudence to submit: There are measures of open turbulence, plans of secret sedition, which may and which ought to obstruct our bounty; there are occasions in which we must abandon those whom we would serve, to preserve the constitution and ourselves. And therefore I caution the Roman Catholics, if they wish to preserve and strengthen their friends, and to disarm their enemies, not to be pushed on by the disproportion of their hopes, and the desperation of their leaders, to schemes of ambition which they may long repent; I warn them against rash counsels, and giddy counsellors: I warn them to repose their cause in the permanent property and permanent character of the nation; in men who have an interest in the general good, and a pleasure in the general favour; and not to trust it to needy adventurers and forward missionaries; men, mean enough to be their flatterers, and mercenary enough to be their stipendiaries: I warn them against secret cabals, and factious meetings, and turbulent resolves and seditious actions; for I tell them, if they proceed to measures of intimidation, their enemies will triumph, and their cause is lost. They have to do with a people whose temper is spirit, and whose sentiment is honour. If they attempt to excite fear, they will only kindle indignation; and again I repeat it to them, their cause is lost.

And now, Sir, let me advert to the language which is used by the foolish friends and crafty enemies of the Catholic cause. They tell you that you are doing nothing for them by this bill, and that as long as you withhold from them every privilege which every Protestant enjoys, they are oppressed men, they are slaves; or in the language of their affectation, they are Helots. The Catholics oppressed! Is it a proof of their oppression, that one of

their arguments, for the exclusion of their privileges is their wealth, and that another is their power? Is it a proof they are oppressed, that they are protected in their lives, their liberties, and their properties, with as ample a security as any Protestant in the land? Is it a proof of their abject state, that they enjoy every luxury, and riot in every excess in which the most wealthy and profligate Protestant can wanton? And is that munificent subscription a proof of their distress, with which they vainly hoped to advance their cause by the purchase and importation of an advocate? Is their clamour a proof of their oppression? Real misery bears its load unheard. It makes no ostentation of grief, no parade of woe. It does not vociferate its clamorous complaint. Where is it to be found? In the wretched peasantry of this country, Protestant as well as Papist. You will find it in their miserable hovels, and among their naked families; you will find it in their precarious tenures, in the extravagance of absent landlords, and the extortion of their griping agents; there is real misery, and there is a call to the humanity of this House. But the Catholics knock at our door, force into our chambers, and with the arrogance of masters and the haughtiness of tyrants they tell us, "truly they are our slaves. Suppose, Sir, I should take one of these slaves at his word, and that I should say to him, 'Resign that tawdry habit which so ill becomes you, and yield it up to those whose station it more properly belongs.' What do you think would be his answer? He would say, 'Sir, I live in a land of freedom, in a country governed by general and equal laws; my property is protected, and it cannot be violated with impunity.' These would be his sentiments, but, I question if they would be couched in words as moderate as mine, much less would they be conveyed with all the humility of servitude. But suppose I should proceed to punish my slave for his contumacy, I fear that a disloyal hand would be raised against its lord. Sir, I have read of slavery, thank God I have never seen it! I have read of those who, worn with chains, and oppressed with labour, have sunk under their burthens, and were only awakened to new misery by the relentless lash of a ferocious keeper. Is this the slavery of the Catholics? I have heard of men, snatched from their country, their families and friends, and deprived of every comfort which nature, sympathy and habit, had rendered necessary to their happiness; wearing out a painful existence in servitude and exile. Is such the servitude of the Catholics? I really am at a loss to know what these self-pitying gentlemen mean when they talk to us of their slavery. Once, it is true, their case called strongly for compassion, and I think I was truly sensible to their complaint. But I must frame new feelings for my mind before I can compassionate their sufferings now. So hard hearted am I become, that I cannot grieve with them that they are deprived of the succession to the throne. So obdurate am I grown, that I cannot lament with

them that they are deprived of seats in this or in the other house, and so inflexible are my feelings, that I cannot weep with them for that most lamentable of all their ills, their exclusion from offices of profit and of trust.

I come now, Sir, most unwillingly indeed, to what has fallen from an honourable friend of mine [Mr. Staples] in the course of the debate. He has hinted at a proposition, the intention of which is no other than this—to imprison the understanding of the present generation, and to throw ineffectual fetters over the understanding of our descendants. If I were not convinced of the good sense and sanity of my honourable friend, I should suppose that such a sentiment had been struck from the burning fancy of some bigotted bedlamite. Good God, Sir! Was my honourable friend serious? Does he not know, that though the principles of a constitution, like the principles of morality, are immutable; the measures of a state, like the actions of an individual, must vary with the varying course of things? Does he not know that the same action which under some circumstances is heroism, under others is murder? That the same measure which to-day is patriotism, to-morrow may be tyranny, but that the principle remains unchanged? Now the Protestant ascendancy is a vital principle of our constitution, interwoven in its whole frame, and essential to its existence. It is recognized and established by the most solemn legislative acts, and on the most awful and interesting occasions. History, tradition, education, prejudice, habit and instinct, root it in our minds; and there is as little danger that an Irish Protestant should discard it, as that an American savage should discard the principle of self-defence. I cannot therefore see any necessity for adding fresh sanctions to this indelible principle now, but I do see that to attempt to circumscribe its future operation to all eternity; to tell posterity that they must not only derive their constitutional shield from us, but that they must wear it precisely as we do; of the same circumference, in the same position, and with the same constancy, through all the changes of strength and weakness, security and danger, philosophy and bigotry, is to transmit an impotent mandate to men whom we cannot bind, but whom we may teach to undervalue the salutary precautions of our wisdom, by forcing them to despise the silly effusions of our fears. But observe how inconsequently these persons argue, who ground themselves on false principles; for how can gentlemen who profess to act from their constituents, dictate immutable conduct to future representatives of future constituents; or, at this day, proclaim to a future Protestant constituency what to such a constituency must be political and expedient? Did our ancestors, when they imposed necessary shackles upon hands rebelliously raised against their lives and fortunes, in the hour of anger or of danger, speak language such as this? Was this the language of 1778, when we broke into the penal code? Was it the lan-

guage of 1782, when the tried loyalty and growing liberality of our Catholic brethren induced us to give them new privileges? At all these periods the political state of the Catholics was accommodated to the times, and it was left for the wisdom of future generations to determine what degree of political subjection might be necessary to their security. But if this idle manifestation of our sentiments, upon a subject which we have neither the right nor power to decide, were merely nugatory and inoperative, I should think it censurable; but when I consider that this attack upon the rights of our Protestant successors, is at the same time an insult to the feelings of our Catholic fellow-subjects, I forget the folly of the measure in its mischief. It sounds a false alarm of constitutional danger; it implies a diffidence in our own wisdom and our own strength; it stigmatizes as suspicious those whom we are about to conciliate, and to whom we are tendering the pledges of mutual confidence; it says, "the rewards of loyalty are exhausted;" it stifles hopes, and animates disaffection. I am sorry and ashamed that the suggestion has been thrown out, and I trust it may never again be necessary to combat it. I trust that the prudence and liberality of the honourable gentleman who brought it forward may demonstrate to him its danger and inefficacy, and that he may retract it.

Permit me, Sir, before I conclude, to say a word or two as to the quantity of favour which this bill confers. I am of opinion that we ought to give every thing which it is demonstratively prudent and safe to give. In speculation, I may think that a limited franchise, for example, might promote the principle of this bill. But I also think, that time and experience are better guides than any speculation. By these tests I wish the present bill should be tried, before we proceed to further concessions. When those arbitrators shall have awarded in favour of my opinion, then I have no doubt but the good conduct of the Catholics shall urge their Protestant fellow-subjects, to call upon their parliament to push forward in the career of liberality.

These, Sir, are my sentiments; and on the discretion of the Roman Catholic body shall my adherence to them depend. If ever it should be said to me, "You have supported the cause of the unworthy; you have embodied sedition, and given it an energy in the constitution." From the moment that such reproaches can, with truth be uttered, from that moment my wishes and exertions cease. But I confess, Sir, I have far other hopes. I do believe that the time is coming, and that we shall live to see it, when every distinction of sectary shall merge in the common interest of citizens: when we shall be one people, united in one object, and possessed of the same powers for its attainment—the peace and welfare of the state.

Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY. Sir, labouring under bodily indisposition, in rising to this question I feel my mind still more oppressed than my body; because I know, Sir, that on every question, great or small, no matter what the force of argument or of character may be, on that side which appears to oppose the wish of the minister, its fate is determined before a word is spoken on the subject; and therefore, Mr. Speaker, whatever I can say on any such occasion, will, I know, be in vain.

But on this subject, the most material to the happiness of Ireland, the conduct of the minister has been most extraordinary. Did the king's minister bring forward this business? No. Did his representative in this country bring it forward? No. An honourable baronet high in the friendship and confidence of ministers, on the first day of the session comes down to this House, and proposes the measure, and moves for leave to bring in this bill; and another right honourable gentleman [Mr. Hobart] not caring to stake the Government too deeply on the issue, contents himself with seconding the motion. The measure was never so much as hinted in the Lord Lieutenant's speech, nor any communication on the subject made to the gentlemen of this House; nor any intimation given of a wish to consult the gentlemen of this House upon the subject; not even with the very members who were pledged to support the measure. By this shuffling conduct, and the eagerness to hurry on this measure, the design is pretty evident on the part of ministers. They wish to secure to themselves the attachment of the Roman Catholics; and to excite their opposition to that desperate body of men (ironically) who sit on this side of the House.

An honourable member has said, he believed this measure came forward by the advice of a British minister; so do I; and so believing, am not surprised to see it find its way into this House. But I think it would have been more creditable to the British minister if the gentlemen of this House had been consulted before the measure was moved by his representative here. I am convinced how highly the wisdom of the British minister is esteemed in this House, and I know that his advice is pretty nearly equivalent to a command; for whatever advice he gives, the gentlemen on that side of the House generally take it.

On the same night that this measure was first moved, an honourable member [Mr. Cusse] on that side of the House, declared that indeed he loved the Catholics, but he loved the Protestants better, and would never consent to any measure that would tend to weaken their ascendancy. The right honourable major was immediately on his legs to second this gentleman's ideas, and declared that he, too, would never consent to any thing injurious to the Protestant interest. Thus the right honourable major declared himself happy in being able to agree with gentlemen on both sides of the question. But though Ad-

ministration here have thus found a way to cloak themselves under a pretence of neutrality, yet I have strong reason to believe that whatever claims the Catholics may advance, they have been encouraged to those claims, and this before the opinion of any one Protestant gentleman of one thousand pounds a-year property in this country was consulted. But so soon as Administration found those claims supported in some measure by a right honourable friend of mine, and that the business became unpopular with the Protestant interest, they then seemed to put the business from their own doors, and by every artifice fought to turn the tide of vulgar prejudice against him, (flapping Mr. Grattan on the knee with his hat) in order to run him down. But he has raised this country too high, and rendered her too important services, to be depreciated but by such mean artifices.

I, Mr. Speaker, shall not make this a question of party: that I leave for those whose policy it is to divide and disunite the people of this country. Let them, if they chuse, make it a question of party; but for my part, Sir, I think it a question above party, which every man should consider, not according to his political affections, but according to his understanding and conscience. I, Sir, shall vote for the measure on this principle, that I believe it to be for the real advantage of the country; but there are some parts of it to which I have strong objections; that part of it, for instance, which respects education, and which only goes to the permission of establishing Roman Catholic seminaries, but does not go to blend the education of the youth of both persuasions in the same university. This is a principle which I conceive to be dangerous to the avowed object of the bill, which is an union of the people; because it is in that age, when the hearts of youth are warm, that those liberal friendships are formed, which actuate them through life; but by educating them in separate seminaries you still keep up the principle of division, and still keep the Roman Catholic in those prejudices you complain of. I am, for this reason, of opinion that their education should be in common, and in the University of Dublin; and therefore I think the bill does not go far enough in this point, but stops where it should begin. If such a principle as I recommend should be adopted, it may be held necessary to enlarge the building. But in all events, the want of this principle is a radical defect in the bill, because it is impossible to effect the good purposes devised, without providing for the common education of the people.

With respect to the power of the crown to modify the charters of the University, or dispense with those statutes that exclude the Roman Catholics, certainly the crown has such a privilege, but still it is right, on a question of so much magnitude, which must ultimately induce a public expence in enlarging the

present building, or founding a new college, that parliament should speak out its opinion.

With respect to the admission of Catholics to the profession of the law; for my own part so far am I from objection, that I give it my most hearty assent. But when we give this we should consider the extent of the influence we confer. For my part, Sir, I am not fond of paying compliments to my profession. But I believe it will be admitted that in that profession are to be found men not only of the greatest talents, but of the most general information on every possible subject; to which they are daily led by constant investigations in the various pursuits of professional practice.

In every free country the law holds the first rank. In every great revolution for the establishment of liberty, lawyers have taken the lead in the glorious work. This was the case in America and France. Therefore, Sir, in giving the Catholics this profession, you give them an influence short of nothing, but that of sitting in this House; and Sir, in giving such an influence, let us accompany and secure it by liberal education.

If this bill is not a measure intended to divide the Catholics and Protestants, and to make it easy for future administrations of the country to divide them at will, there can be no objection to what I have now proposed. And surely, Sir, it will be wiser in us to shew the Catholics of this country, that it is to their Protestant fellow-subjects in this House they are to look for protection and indulgence, instead of any minister of this country or any of the persons who usually support him.

As to the conduct of Administration in this business, though the measure be a good one, they deserve all blame. For no minister should have presumed to meddle in such a business, without having first consulted the Protestant gentlemen of the country. Yet in this business the minister has made it as much the measure of Administration, as if it were a common money bill.

With respect to the other parts of the bill, I shall reserve my opinion until it comes before the committee. But before I sit down, I shall say thus much in defence of the man in this House whom I most respect: I am positively convinced, it was never his intention, for one single moment, to support any measure tending in the smallest degree to injure the Protestant ascendancy.

Mr. Secretary HOBART, said, being particularly alluded to, I beg leave to trouble the House with a few words. The honourable gentleman has talked of the conduct of Government out of this House, and accused it of setting on the people to run down a right honourable gentleman. Sir, it is not my business to say what motives induced the citizens of Dublin to instruct him; but as to any interference of Government, I declare the

charge is utterly unfounded; I appeal to the citizens of Dublin themselves; let them declare their motives. The honourable gentleman complains that Government did not consult the country gentlemen of Ireland; I know of no way of taking the sense of the country gentlemen of Ireland, but in the House of Commons. The first day of the session this bill was announced, and met with no opposition but from my right honourable friend [Mr. Ogle] whose opinions I do most highly respect. A week afterwards the bill was introduced, and every point of it explained; another week was given for the second reading; and a third for its committal.

One observation more: This measure is intended to unite all his majesty's subjects of this kingdom. Their union and their happiness is my anxious wish, consequently, if any measure is offered that can have a contrary tendency, by binding up the power of parliament, I must oppose it.

Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY. Sir, I said it was my opinion that Government had interfered to run down the right honourable gentleman; and I founded my opinion on seeing paving-men, and pipe-water-men, and police-men, and men that never joined before, all agree upon this occasion.

Sir THOMAS OSBORNE spoke in favour of the bill.

Right Hon. Mr. CUFFE. The honourable gentleman has been pleased to observe upon what fell from me when the bill was first mentioned. I dare say, Sir, my words were not very oratorical, nor my manner very graceful; I am not an orator by trade, nor do I boast of verbosity; I speak right on, as a plain country gentleman; yet what I said that evening, I will put down in contrast with any thing that gentleman has said this winter, and I believe the country will think it as worthy of attention. Sir, I am not dictated to by any minister, I speak the sentiments of a Protestant country gentleman; and when the honourable gentleman again thinks proper to allude to my words, I hope he will state them fairly.

Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY. I did not undertake to recite the speech of the right honourable gentleman; I only mentioned the substance of it, "that he loved the Protestant ascendancy, and would not agree to any thing injurious to it," or some such words: as to myself, I am not very anxious about my language, nor will I enter into a competition with any gentleman on that subject.

Mr. EGAN: I rise, Sir, upon a most important question, such as must appal the most vigorous, the most constant mind;

no less than, whether the legislature shall, by the abolition of pains, penalties, prejudices and degradations, give political existence, utility, and animation, to three millions of palsied disheartened subjects of this unfortunate country? I will tell the right honourable gentleman [Mr. Cuffe] who spoke last but one, and who disclaims all oratory or predilection for orators, what one of the sages of Greece answered to this question: "Which was the most perfect popular government?" "That where the laws are more regarded than the orators." I will beg to tell him also the answer of another sage to the same question; that of the illustrious Solon, "Where an injury done to the meanest subject is an insult upon the whole constitution." How maturely then, Sir, should we look to those laws, which inflict injury, insult and degradation upon three millions of unoffending subjects. If there is any man in this House from nature senseless enough to think, if there is any man by religious prejudice bigotted enough to believe, if there is one by professional or instructed hypocrisy base enough to avow, that the Catholics are not intitled to the rights of men, I promise that I will argue with none such. I consign the fool to his dungeon; I consign the bigot to the incarceration of his own mind; and the hypocrite, not being within the reach of human vengeance, his impiety I must leave to an omnipotent hand. But to the man who challenges with the weapons of reason, and who, to qualify himself for the combat, admits in argument what is indispensable to all demonstration, the first principles, the acknowledged axioms, without the concession of which all argument would be endless folly, and demonstration argument; to such I address myself, with such I shall be happy to combat; to such I shall willingly submit if defeated, and if victorious over such men, arrogant triumph would be defeat. But why do I talk of victory on the one hand, or defeat on the other. What have I to gain by victory, unless, in those days of depravity, it could be supposed that the only wealth I treasured was the future happiness of millions, by the indissoluble union of my country, and its consequent rapid and inevitable aggrandizement, in which I could have no participation, save the consciousness, that I contributed my mite to the abundance of millions. By victory then, I have nothing to gain, but what the vulgar and the vicious disregard and disparage; by defeat that of which they value the attainment, and magnify the possession. I have among triumphant Protestants to take my share in the greedy zeal of oppression; I have to calculate minute additional power and consequence, by the calamitous disfranchisement and degradation of three millions: I have, like the mental miser, to bring the money scales of malignity, and weigh how much my consequence becomes preponderatory from the misery of others. Constitutional rights are only an acquisition by that barter or exchange,

which the individual chuses to make of the valuable rights of nature. Rights are only to be invaded or forfeited by wrongs. By what wrong, either those inflicted upon the individual by the offences of others, or those inflicted in fact upon him by himself, because committed against his society? Against the first the laws vindicate by prevention or by compensation. Those offences inflicted by men upon themselves, the laws of society cannot vindicate against the aggression of, but screen the repetition of such enormities, by making the commission of such wrongs a suicide upon the constitution of rights. But such offences being personal no man will dispute, their punishment ought to be temporary, at farthest commensurate with the existence of the offender. Thus far the individual transgressing against his own rights, by violating the laws he had originally fabricated or virtually adopted ought to be punished: but what law is bold enough, what commandment audacious enough, to prescribe that the punishment of the aggressor shall be transmissible to his children's children, in personal afflictions, in social discomfitures, in constitutional depredations? And though the human audacity has presumed so far, shall it farther arrogate to itself that vengeance which the Deity has disclaimed? Shall it give to punishments no day of remission, to human affliction no period of limitation? Thus, contrasting the malignity of man against the mercy of God. The business of laws is to govern human affections, not to prevent them; to direct them to happiness, not to obstruct them, not to check their current but to prevent their wandering out of their natural course. There are propensities which the author of nature has implanted in the human breast, that it is impossible for human institutions to eradicate. The art of legislation consists in improving and directing those propensities, so as to promote the general good, the public felicity: it is as impossible, as it would be absurd to attempt to annihilate them. Yet, such is the arrogance of man, that he has attempted to alter nature, and to make a political individual entirely different from the natural. The laws of Lycurgus punish a remarkable instance of this presumption, but the laws of Lycurgus are gone; human nature has vindicated herself and is unchangeable. Our popery laws furnished a few years ago another melancholy instance of this legislative arrogance. Their object in many instances was and still is to invert the order of nature; to set a parent and child, husband and wife at variance, to change the course of descent, to force the affections into a new and unnatural channel, to violate all the tenderest relations of life, to poison domestic happiness, and to exclude three millions of the subjects of the state from public felicity. If the end of government be, as it indispensably is, the safety and happiness of the state, the most effectual way of accomplishing that end, is to make it the

interest of every individual of the state to lend his assistance in the attainment of that end.

Subordination then might be in every state, as there might be in all great machines; but the great wheels ought to be so continual as to set the smaller in motion, not to impede their operation, and in so doing to waste their strength: yet so it is in the system of our popery laws, that the Protestant spends half its strength in reducing and keeping in subjugation the popish interest, instead of wisely uniting both to the attainment of eternal security, and defence against external injury. Give both a common interest in the conservation of the constitution and the prosperity of the state, and both will co-operate to those ends; but as long as one is intent upon contention and subjugation, and the other looks no farther than defence, the strength of the overseers of both will be lost to the community. Advert for a moment to the period of the revolution. How was England employed at that crisis? In laying the foundation of her liberties. How was Ireland employed? In destroying the liberties of two-thirds of her own subjects. What was the consequence? That the same period is the æra of freedom to England, which is the æra of slavery to us. Ireland sacrificed commerce and constitution at the altar of loyalty, but was content to make atonement upon its own subjects for what is sacrificed to England. While the Protestants of Ireland were forging chains for the Catholics, their brethren of England were forging chains for them; and chains which would have galled them to this instant, if the common calamities of their country, uniting all its inhabitants in a common cause, and destroying all distinction of Protestant and Papist, had not broken those fetters asunder, and opened to us a freer and more liberal sphere of action. Great revolutions are generally produced by the spirit of the people. They never can be produced by any means unless the people are ready to receive them. Why did Ireland succeed in her demand of a free trade? I will tell you: because all ranks and conditions of men were united in the demand. The distresses of the people had come home to the senses of every man. The Catholic felt them as well as the Protestant: the pedlar in his shop, as well as the merchant in a counting house; the landed as well as the commercial interest of the country. All had an equal advantage in demanding; all an equal advantage in attaining it. Why were we not equally successful at the same period on the requisition of a free constitution? Because we were not equally interested in demanding it. Because if attained, all would not equally participate in it. Because the Catholics of Ireland are not actually nor virtually represented in the Parliament of Ireland, or because they were therefore at that time indifferent as to which of the two kingdoms constitutional supremacy should reside. But how should you at last obtain

the supreme power of your state? I will remind you: you mocked your people in its requisition! you inveigled and animated the Roman Catholics into associations, and put arms into their hands, in violation of existing laws, to combat for the restoration of constitution. England saw the union, the consideration of Catholic and Protestant, for liberty; and England surrendered to your national union and co-operation in a moment, what she had refused for half a century, to Protestant requisition and national justice. Reflect upon the gratitude of a Protestant parliament. You obtained, by the hostile aspect of arrayed Catholics, that constitution, which was long detained in English captivity. They triumphantly brought back the palladium of their country, and deposited it in its sanctuary; and then you interdict three millions of its emancipators from visiting its abode, supplicating its protection, or ever expressing their veneration! What are the pretences, what the pretexts alledged by a Protestant parliament for this constitutional exclusion? That the Catholics entertain, though they do not profess, principles hostile to liberty; and that their election would be a participation in franchise, subversive of Protestant ascendancy in church and state. Let me dispassionately examine the objection, I trust I will demonstrate to you the first objection is an unfounded imputation resulting from those lands of penalties, forfeitures, and deprecations, which, less just than sanguinary, want the plea of passion, or irritation, to justify the continuance of savage severity. These unmerciful laws forced the Catholics into a complaisance to courts. Look within your code of laws, and you will find the cause, you will find the necessity, of that complaisance. You suppose there is something in their religion that occasions it; but you are mistaken; you are the authors of it yourselves. That it is nothing inherent in their religion, history, experience, truth, confirm and demonstrate. Religions cannot become servile by change of climate, soils, or times. That spirit of religion which gave existence to the establishment of freedom at one period, cannot subvert it at another. Look to English, look to Irish history, you will find both authenticate, that the English, and the Irish Catholic venerate the name of freedom. Look to the blood they shed for centuries, to prevent English usurpation. Look to that vindictive policy of disuniting the Catholic, by which alone England established that usurpation. Look to the august example of France; all demonstrate Catholic feelings ardently alive to constitutional independence. The legislature makes laws; it is the office of the crown to carry them into execution. The legislature makes laws, rather in vengeance and severity; the Catholic could not have existed, if the crown did not countenance them, now where that vengeance and severity are much abated, the Catholic could not hope for restoration to human rights. His situation would re-

seem that of the damned, as represented by Milton, doomed to perdition, and debarred from hope. Severity then, instead of securing Protestant ascendancy, corroborates prerogative. Banish that vengeance, execrate that severity, you will detach Catholics from this unnatural complaisance to the crown, and make them contemplate the legislature as their patrons. The Catholics find the legislature cruel, vengeful, unrelenting, unforgiving. They find the crown commiserating, forgiving, professing and practising benignity and mercy. Is it then to be wondered to which they have attached? Is it to be astonished that legislative persecution has compelled them to take sanctuary in executive commiseration.

Right Hon. WILLIAM BRABAZON PONSONBY would vote for the bill being committed; but should not think himself in any manner precluded by that vote, from opposing in the committee any part of the bill he might disapprove of. He voted for the principle of the bill only on this ground, that he believed it not at all inimical to the Protestant ascendancy.

Mr. OGLE said, he had wished to have heard the sentiments of gentlemen before he had spoken himself; had he heard them he should not have said a word. As to the amendment he intended to move to the preamble, he should certainly not move it; if he found that preamble pledged the House to any thing but to support the Protestant ascendancy; and he hoped that most of those who had spoken in the debate would support him in it.

Mr. GRATTAN, said, Sir, in rising to this question, I feel myself very peculiarly circumstanced, because I shall differ from the sentiments of a part of my constituents whom I highly respect; but in the part I shall take I feel that I shall more materially serve the true interests of the capital in general, than I should in complying with the instructions of a few, when the question is, whether three millions of loyal subjects are to be kept in a degrading subjection to a body of one million? I will capitulate with no set of men on a subject where the interest, the justice and the prosperity of this country are at stake. I have on this question two objects: first, the Protestant; second, the Catholic. What is the condition of the latter? He cannot exercise his industry in any one profession; bar, army or navy; he cannot obtain a degree in physic; he cannot receive any education foreign or domestic; he cannot intermarry with a Protestant; and if a Protestant should by evasion marry a Catholic, she communicates to her husband the taint of disability; he cannot carry arms for his amusement or his defence; he cannot employ a Protestant servant to carry arms for him; he is bound without his consent, taxed without being represented, and is excluded from the po-

litical, civil, military and constitutional functions, to whose establishment he is made to contribute. You despise to tell the Roman Catholic that such a condition is a state of political freedom. You have ascertained the value of those rights from which he is excluded. You have taught him that no human condition is supportable without political freedom; and that no man circumstanced like him is politically free. You despise to speak in the same country two languages. "These things are necessary for human liberty, but without these the Catholic may be free." He has in the course of the last fifteen years been witness of three controversies on the subject of political freedom; that of America, that of France, and that of Ireland: the lessons he has learned from them must be implanted in his breast for ever. His destination we must therefore allow is not that of freedom, and his sense of that destination we must suppose to be clear and decided. We have considered his punishment, let us now consider his offences. The pretender is no more, that former bond of Catholic union, never the object of his hope, and now no longer the source of his despair, extinct, and with him the spring, and passion, and apprehension of these laws. You will please to recollect that these laws were made principally to guard the succession of the crown against the followers of the house of Stuart, and that Catholicity was not so much the object of the penalty as the evidence of the attachment. The pope, a name driven out of his capital of popery; France unable to curse, scarce permitted to bless; without temporal, and now a suppliant even for spiritual authority; the type of the fall of bigotry, and a lesson to all dominant sects of Christianity, and to you among others, not to use their God as a scourge for their fellow creatures. It is something, on a question touching the repeal of the penal laws, that the principal causes for which they were made; the one has expired and the other is expiring; the pope and the pretender. France, that ancient head of Catholic league, vanished out of that confederacy, and propounding new systems of politics, and new principles of religion, fatal to bigotry either in church or state, and subversive of that slavery temporal and spiritual, at which for the last century we have been accustomed to tremble. Whatever therefore may be the crime of the Catholic to ground a code of disability, there is one offence, of which he is not, and of which he cannot now be guilty; disaffection, because the objects and the resource of disaffection, and with them the principle itself, must have departed. His offence is therefore reduced to two heads; his nativity, as connected with claims of property; and his religion, as distinct from views of politics. As to the first, he directly and immediately meets the charge: he denies that any such claims exist: he denies the possibility of their existence: he denies that he could benefit or you lose by the repeal of the act of settlement;

he relies upon it that your title is, by time as well as act of parliament: he insists that a greater number of Roman Catholics take under the act of settlement, than could prefer claim on the repeal of it: that such claims, if any, are common to you, as your title under the act of settlement is common to him; and he offers you any assurance not only for your titles, which he reveres, but for your fears, which he respects; and he alledges that the whole Catholic body are ready and desirous to take the same oath to secure the act of settlement, which you have thought sufficient to secure the succession of the crown. He desires you to name your own conditions and terms of abjuration, touching any imputed claim on this subject: thus the code of disabilities as far as they are maintained on this ground, is reduced to an act of power, which disables three millions of people for the untraceable descent of a few, grounded on the apprehension of claims imputed to that few which they cannot trace, which none make, and which all abjure.

I come now to the other head of offence; his religion, as distinct from politics. I am well aware in questions of this sort how little religion affects their determination: however, we must not, like ardent disputants, in the fury of the controversy forget the subject, nor in the zeal of the sectarist, lose all recollection of the Godhead; it is necessary to remind you, that the Catholics acknowledge the same God, and the same Redeemer, and differ from you only in the forms of his worship and ceremonies of his commemoration; and that however that difference may be erroneous, it is not sufficiently heinous to warrant you in dispensing with the express and prime ordinances of your own religion, which enjoin certain fraternal affection towards all men, and particularly towards fellow christians, whom you must allow to be saved, and are commanded to love: admitting the principles of your religion in any degree to affect your determinations, you cannot suffer their prime injunction to be cancelled by any ambition of monopoly, or any views to the sole and exclusive profits of the state. It is not sufficient to acknowledge the divinity of your God as an historic fact, you must feel his charities and attest your belief, not only in cheap and easy prayer, but in an animated practical philanthropy. You cannot say, speaking as mere Christians, it is true, God ordered these things, but if we complied, the Catholics would get some share of political power. You cannot thank your God for the redemption of mankind, and of these among the rest, and rise from your knees, and inflict on his followers, temporal disabilities on account of their religion: we cannot exercise a political, practical atheism, in the name and on the behalf of our God: if we are justified in imposing disabilities on account of religion, all Christendom should have been disqualified until the sixteenth century; and even now the greater part of Christendom should remain disqualified, for

the greater part is Catholic; then our ideas on politics and religion compounded would amount to this extraordinary proposition, that Protestants ought to inflict all over the world where they can, disabilities on the majority of the followers of Christ, who would thus stand in a strange predicament, objects to their brethren of perpetual proscription, and objects to our God, by the acknowledgments of those brethren, of perpetual salvation; and this situation would be the more inexplicable, when we maintain that our right to impose these perpetual disabilities arises from the superior benevolence and mildness of the Protestant religion; we, therefore, arguing this question merely on the ground of Christians, are driven to these straits, either to relax the principles of our code, or to surrender the principles of our religion. Let us shut our eyes, however, to revelation, and look to some other light for our justification; let us turn to the law of nature; but surely we are led or betrayed by that light to revolt, at eternal disabilities imposed upon men for theological errors: the law of nature knows, nor physical, nor metaphysical, nor theological proscription: she imposes no precise standard of theological opinion: in her production many things are analogous; nothing is the same, not even in the vegetable tribe, still less in the workings of the human intellect, and least of all on a subject in whose contemplation that intellect is strained and exhausted, to justify disabilities on account of theological errors; we must therefore have recourse to some other law, than the law of Christianity, or the law of nations; we imagine we have found it in our own peculiar situation; that situation we state to be as follows: the Protestants are the few, and have the power; the Catholics have not the power, and are the numbers: but this is not peculiar to us, but common to all nations; the Asiatics and the Greeks, the Greeks and the Italians, the English and the Saxons, the Saxon, English and Normans, the vanquished and the vanquisher, they all at last intermingled; the original tribe was in number superior; and yet that superiority never prevented the incorporation; so that this state of our settlement is not peculiar to Ireland, but the ordinary progress of the population and the circulation of the human species, and as it were the trick of nature, to preserve by intermixture, from dwindling and degeneracy, the animal proportions. In some tribes it might have been otherwise, but they must have died, before they could reach history, a prey to their disputes, or swept off, by the tide of other nations washing them away in their little divisions, and leaving something better on their shore—solitude or a wiser people.

Had the English settlers, and the native Irish, been Pagans, they must have united: am I to understand that the Christian religion separates, and sharpens the natural mildness of barbarous generations, and condemns men, to perpetual degrading caste,

so that the errors of the Bramin are the wisdom of Christ. Ridiculous! What then becomes of this argument, founded on the supposition of a peculiar situation? But here another principle is advanced, connected indeed with the argument of situation, the Protestant ascendancy, I revere it, I wish for ever to preserve it, but in order to preserve I beg to understand it.

The Protestant ascendancy I conceive to be two-fold, first, your superiority in relation to the Catholic; second, your strength, in relation to other objects; to be the superior sect, is a necessary part, but only a part of your situation. To be a Protestant state, powerful and able to guard yourself and your island against those dangers to which all states are obnoxious, is another part of your situation. In the one point of view I consider you as a victorious sect; in the other as the head of a growing nation, and not the first sect in a distracted land, rendered by that division a province and not a nation. It would be my wish to unite the two situations, a strong state, with the Protestant at the head of it; but in order that the head of the state should be secure, its foundation should be broad. Let us see how far the Protestant ascendancy in its present condition is competent to defend itself: can it defend itself against a corrupt minister? Is the Protestant ascendancy able to prevent oppressive taxes, controul the misapplication of public money, obtain any of the constitutional bills we have repeatedly proposed, or repeal any of the obnoxious regulations the country has repeatedly lamented? There is in this House one man who has more power in parliament than all the Protestant ascendancy; I need not tell you, for you know already, as the Protestant parliament is now composed, that which you call the Protestant ascendancy is a name. We are governed by the ascendancy of the treasury. Let us try the force of the Protestant ascendancy in the election of the people. A general election in Ireland is no appeal to a Protestant people, for they do not return the parliament. The Protestant ascendancy returns for corporate towns about ten or twelve members, the rest are returned nominally by corporate towns, but really by individuals. A general election in Ireland, and particularly since the sale of Peerages, is an increase of the strength of the minister, and a decrease of the strength of the people; and by the people I mean the Protestant community. The ascendancy, therefore, in elections, is not the ascendancy of a Protestant people, it is a ministerial and an aristocrate ascendancy. Let us discuss your strength in other trials; you are weak against an administration. I know what you did in 1779 and in 1782; but I know in both those periods the Catholic acted in conjunction with you, and each period was immediately anteceded or accompanied by the repeal of a part of the penal code: you are weak, I say, against an administration! How are you against an invasion? Let me suppose that event.

I know some of you would say, we should stand between two fires. I do not believe it, but I do much apprehend, unless you relax your code, that we should stand between the fire of the enemy and the apathy of our own people. If the Catholic resorts to force or to threats he is lost, he has only to resort to your own laws to do you mischief, and in an obdurate and dutiful adherence to act of parliament, to remain a disarmed spectator of the invasion of his country, unarrayed and unenlisted.

You must, however, in that event, arm them for your defence, as you did in the last, and proposed to do in the former war, and instead of repealing your laws for his sake, you must then break them for your own; but you will place little reliance on the languid battalion of an interdicted people, and then the unpopular Hanoverian; then the mercenary Hessian; then the unfeeling German, must come and guard you with foreign mercenaries against your natural friends as well as your enemies. A nation thus unable to protect itself without such assistance, becomes the easy prey of any minister, and the British government may say to the Protestants of Ireland, Gentlemen, you are perfectly excluding from freedom three-fourths of your people, but as they happen to be three-fourths of your people it is impossible that your ill fated country, even in your own instance, should expect all the blessings of the British constitution. You, as well as the Catholic, therefore, must make allowance if your Government is somewhat arbitrary and exceedingly corrupt. Why do you murmur? You have demanded liberty for yourselves, you have refused it to one another: we will, however, soften your situation. The Protestant shall enslave the Catholic, and the minister shall coerce the Protestant, and thus we accommodate your religious distinctions.

There is another danger to which, or to the fear of which your divisions may expose the Protestant ascendancy, I mean an union; let me suppose the minister, as he has often proposed corrupt terms to the Protestant, should propose crafty ones to the Catholic, and should say, you are three-fourths of the people, excluded from the blessings of an Irish constitution; accept the advantages of an English union. Here is a proposal probably supported by the people of England, and rendered plausible to at least three-fourths of the people of Ireland. I mention an union, because I have heard it has been darkly suggested as the resort of Protestant desperation against Catholic pretensions; never think of it. The Protestant would be the first victim. There would be Catholic equality and parliamentary extinction. It would be fatal to the Catholic also; he would not be raised, but you would be depressed, and his chance of liberty blasted for ever; it would be fatal to England, beginning with a false compromise, which they might call an union, to end in eternal separation through the progress of two civil wars. I have stated

three dangers to which your ascendancy is exposed; let me suggest a fourth. The intermediate state of political languor whenever the craft of the minister touches you in your religious decisions. The loss of nerve, the decay of fire, the oblivion of grievances, and the palsy of your virtue, your harp unstrung of its best passions, and responsive only to notes of gratitude for injuries, and grace and thanksgiving for corruption.

From all this what do I conclude? That the Protestant ascendancy in Ireland requires a new strength, and that you must find that strength in adopting a people, in a progressive adoption of the Catholic body, in such manner, and with such temperament as you who have the legislature in your hands may well devise, and such as shall gradually unite, and ultimately incorporate; but this will be better understood when I answer an objection made to the bill before you, on a supposition that giving the Roman Catholic power in your country, you only enable him to subvert her establishment. By power must be intended interest, and then the argument will be, that if you give a man an interest in the state, you give him a disposition to destroy it, which is to attribute to the Catholic a passion for political suicide. Sir, the objection assumes two propositions which cannot co-exist, that the Roman Catholic will have power arising from the repeal of disabilities, and the disposition arising from the continuation of them. Sir, the repeal of the disability is the repeal of the passion that grows from it. Gentlemen fall into a sad error when they suppose theological opinions form mankind into distinct political societies, as if there was a political society of Deists or Atheists, or of Free-thinkers; it is not the opinion but the penalty that forms the fraternity, disability is now the constitutive act, forming the Catholic into a distinct association; and the repeal of the disability is the act of its dissolution; I rely upon it that the progressive repeal of the disabling code must accomplish political conformity; the progress of affection is inseparable from the progress of the power; that power grows by slow degrees and stages, in every stage dissociating the Catholic from his own sect, and associating him to yours; conforming him to your nature, and assimilating him to your strength, while he adds life and vigour to his own: to give capacity is one thing, to give enjoyment is another; and in every advance from the capacity to the enjoyment, a personal interference takes place, and animosity dies, and a conformity of mind grows on a conformity of interest; the soul of the one sect enlarges by the act of giving, that of the other by receiving, until each is depurated from the spleen of the controversialist, and both are enlarged into one people.

I speak of the nature of man; I speak of the affections inseparable from that nature; I speak of the great emotions of the heart and decisions of the head, and not of the momentary irrita-

bilities of some nerves in the brain, whilst controversy flings for the hour, and for the hour only, unless a proscriptive law shall make the idle sensation eternal.

I apply to the present state of religion in Europe, and I deny that men act as religious combinations, except when they are interdicted. How do we ourselves? How do Protestants act? do we vote for instance, as a religious combination under the direction of the parson; or as a political combination for political interest; or a private combination for our own? How do Presbyterians act? do they vote as religious combinations at the presbyter's beck; or for the Presbyterian candidate against their own landlord and their own interest?

In other countries—America—do Catholics and Protestants, or Protestant and Catholic there act as religious combinations, under the distinct banner of priest or parson, or as a solid combined mass of people? Is not her infancy competent to instruct our age on this subject, and give us simple but august and exalted instruction of morality, policy and wisdom? France, does she act as a religious combination? or are her Catholics and Protestants arrayed as distant clans of religionists? How do modern Protestants in England act? How do they act on the subject of religion? A bill in 1775 passed the Parliament of Great Britain establishing Popery in Canada. How did a Protestant majority, how did Protestant bishops vote, as a religious or political combination? They voted for the bill, for the ministry, for the Popish religion. How have you acted lately? A viceroy catholically affected and catholically connected, is placed in the Government. How do placemen, how do bishops act? They see his family, a very ancient and most respectable one, proceed to the mass; are Protestants revolted; do they withdraw their support; do the bishops resist him; do the courtiers desert him; do they act as a religious or a political combination? They vote for the viceroy, for the minister, for the place and for the pension. Let us come to the particulars of some part of this code, see whether the obstacle to conformity is not in the law, that law, for instance, that will not allow a Roman Catholic to hold a commission in the army. What does it but forbid an opportunity of associating with the Protestant, and a mild but compulsory means of conformity? It is the mess more than the chaplain; what can we say against admitting the Catholic officer when we admit the Catholic multitude? Shall we say that Catholic numbers, who from their pay can have no temptations, and from their education no information, and who are precisely that description of Catholics at whose arms you revolt, may with safety, and have been with great use, admitted among your troops; and a Catholic gentleman, cannot be trusted with a commission? Am I to understand that if Catholic officers were intermixed with Protestants they would model the regiment; and then with the assistance of Catholic lawyers shutting up the courts

of justice by which the latter live, levy war against the British empire? In the same way the law preventing Catholics from coming to the bar, is another provision against conformity, a provision against association with Protestants: the temple, the fraternity of club and bar, are more likely to produce conformity than the closet. You have tried the force of study to convert mankind, try the pleasure of the table, try personal intercourse, mere human means much more gross, but perhaps more efficacious. In the same way are our laws respecting the education so many provisions against conformity; they exclude the Catholic in his docile years from our society and our information, and enact that they from their earliest infancy shall live and learn only from one another; we send them and punish them for being sent to foreign and Catholic countries to imbibe the principles of religion and politics; and then we make the prejudice of their education a reason for the continuation of their proscription, proceeding in a succession from cause to consequence, and from consequence to cause.

One defect in this bill is, that it does not open the university. By virtue of this exclusion you prevent any man from the practice of physic, unless he gets his degree in some other university: Here again your laws deprive the state of another opportunity of conformity by personal intercourse, and endeavour to deprive yourselves of health by the advantage of his science and medicine. Just so are the laws respecting marriage, so many provisions against conformity, and a code for the preservation of their claims; no association by mixture of kindred; no oblivion of title by intermixture of family: such part of our laws are formed to perpetuate casts, and to ordain Catholic blindness, and preserve exclusive Catholic clan and association. I disapprove much of that part of the bill which leaves intermarriage subject to disfranchisement: you at once legalize, and you punish the connection: you encourage and you deter, and you make yourselves the object of your severity, and diminish the base of your own strength, and turn your prejudices against your own power and privilege.

I conclude this part of the subject by observing that the privileges we speak of do not give to the Catholic the power to subvert the establishment, neither do they leave the disposition. They resort to personal intercourse as a means of political conformity; they employ political intercourse as a further means of that conformity, and they give a common interest by law to men who have a common interest by nature.

Another objection has been advanced against the repeal, an objection founded on their imputed character, but character is no delinquency, much less the character which the interdicting sect gives the interdicted. You do not disqualify the tories, because they are arbitrary; nor methodists, because they are mad; nor courtiers because they are servile. If imputed character was de-

linquency, the sword of the conqueror, the acrimony of the sectarian, and the tales of the nurse, would be the measures of your justice, and the laws of your country. The charge against the character of the Catholics resolves itself into two heads, a supposed predilection to arbitrary government, and a supposed idolatrous veneration towards their spiritual pastors. As to the first, *Magna Charta* is the answer. As to the latter, their present proceedings in Ireland, and the proceedings of other Catholics abroad, are an answer. It is true, the clergy have generally greater influence where the flock is interdicted, and the spiritual guide is, by that interdiction, made the political head, and leader of party: but I forget; on this part of the subject we are silenced. Can we, who have enacted darkness by act of parliament, reproach the Catholics with a want of light? We have forbidden their education, we are responsible for their ignorance: however ignorant some may suppose them, we must allow there are among them some who can write, and we may suppose therefore there are some who can read. Let us take care how we press this part of the subject, lest the character which we give of the Catholic, the English should extend to the Irish in general, and give to both that degrading description which we give of one another: this objection is however strengthened, we are told, by the present publications and passions of the Catholics of Ireland: let me trace the history of those passions and publications, the first cause and origin was the American war.

America complained that she was bound and taxed without her consent. The Catholic complains that he is taxed without his consent. America said, a people taxed without their consent were slaves; the Catholics say, a people taxed without their consent are slaves: the friends of American liberty said, taxation and representation are inseparable; God hath joined them, no British parliament can separate them; they applauded the passion as well as the principle: three millions of men dead to all sense of liberty, would be fit instruments for enslaving England, were the words of Lord Chatham. America has resisted, I rejoice says he, that America has resisted, but on this dispute the fiercest champion was Ireland. In 1785, do you remember your discourses on the court addresses? The best argument in favour of the Catholic claims is, the defence by Ireland, and particularly by the Presbyterians of Ireland in favour of America. How did you at that time crush to shivers the little pretences of monopoly, and the frivolous pretences about the act of navigation, and so vile a peddling argument as the policy of empire, advanced against the eternal truth and original justice that clothed the half-naked American, when he stood invincible on his great maxim. No representation, no freedom? The next occasion was your own revolution; in your own case you had an opportunity of displaying yourself on this principle, and of exposing that ridiculous impossi-

tion, that would affect to set up civil liberty as compensation for the loss of political. You shewed the habeas corpus, trial by jury, rights of property, and rights of person, were nothing, if they depended on laws, in the making or repealing of which you might have no kind of concern. You instanced several examples in the commercial restrictions on Irish trade, and therefore you pronounced no civil, unless there is political freedom; the Catholic listened, and believed he caught the fire from your own lips, and now approaches you with your triumphant disquisition. It is an embarrassment, but an embarrassment which you must have foreseen with certainty, and you will govern no doubt with prudence; whatever you do, it is my humble wish that it may turn to the good of all, and your own in particular.

I conclude this part of the subject by saying, as broadly and unconditionally as words can import, that the progressive adoption of the Roman Catholics does not surrender, but ascertains the Protestant ascendancy, or that it does not give the Catholic the power to shake the establishment of your constitution in church or state, or property, neither does it leave him the disposition; it gives him immunities, and it makes Catholic privileges Protestant power: I repeat the idea, and never did any more decide my head or my heart: my sense of public justice and of public utility. I repeat the idea, that the interdict makes you two sects, and its progressive repeal makes you one people, placing you at the head of that people for ever, instead of being a sect for ever, without a people, equal perhaps to coerce the Catholic, but obnoxious, both you and the Catholic, to be coerced by any other power; the minister if he wishes to enslave, or the enemy if he wishes to invade you; an ill-assured settlement, unprepared to withstand those great diseases which are inseparable from the condition of nations, and may finally consume you, and in the mean time, subject to those intermitting fevers and pains, which shake by fits your public weal, and enfeeble all her determinations.

I have on this occasion submitted my genuine sentiments; if they differ from yours I lament it, and appeal to the wisdom of the next generation from the errors of their fathers. If they differ from those of some of my own constituents, I lament it also, for I love them and revere them; but this is a question vital to you and to the Catholics in the present and everlasting condition of both. I cannot, therefore, capitulate with any errors, founded however they may be on the best motives. You think what I say is novelty, another age will think it plain and humble truth. I sit down re-asserting my sentiments, which are, that further removal of disabilities is necessary, to make the Catholic a freeman, and the Protestant a people.

Mr. M. BERESFORD spoke in favour of the principle of the bill in its present limited state, but was no friend to an extension of that principle.

Hon. F. H. HUTCHINSON voted for its committal.

Mr. CURRAN said, he would have yielded to the lateness of the hour, his own indisposition, and the fatigue of the House, and have let the motion pass without a word from him on the subject, if he had not heard some principles advanced which could not pass without animadversion. He knew, he said, that a trivial subject of the day would naturally engage them more deeply, than any more distant object of however greater importance, but he begged they would recollect, that the petty interest of party must expire with themselves, and that their heirs must be, not statesmen, nor placemen, nor pensioners, but the future people of the country at large. He knew, he said, of no so awful call upon the justice and wisdom of an assembly, as the reflection that they were deliberating on the interests of posterity. On this subject, he could not but lament, that the conduct of the administration was so unhappily calculated to disturb and divide the public mind, to prevent the nation from receiving so great a question with the coolness it required.

At Cork, the present viceroy was pleased to reject a most moderate and modest petition from the Catholics of that city. Their next step was to create a division among the Catholics themselves; the next was to hold them up as a body formidable to the English government, and to their Protestant fellow subjects; for how else could any man account for the scandalous publication which was hawked about this city, in which his majesty was made to give his royal thanks to an individual of this kingdom for his protection of the state? But he conjured the House to be upon their guard against those despicable attempts to traduce their people; to alarm their fears, or to inflame their resentment: gentlemen have talked as if the question was, whether we may, with safety to ourselves, relax or repeal the laws which have so long concerned our Catholic fellow subjects? The real question is, whether you can, with safety to the Irish constitution, refuse such a measure? It is not a question merely of their sufferings or their relief, it is a question of your own preservation. There are some maxims, he said, which an honest Irishman will never abandon, and by which every public measure may be fairly tried. These are, the preservation of the constitution upon the principles established at the revolution, in church and state; and next, the independency of Ireland, connected with Britain as a confederated people, and united dissolubly under a common and inseparable Crown. If you wish to know how these great objects may be affected by a repeal of those laws, see how they were affected by their enactment. Here you have the infallible test of fact and experience; and wretched

indeed must you be, if false shame, false pride, false fear, false spirit, can prevent you from reading that lesson of wisdom which is written in the blood and the calamities of your country. Here Mr. Curran went into a detail of the popery laws as they affected the Catholics of Ireland. He described them as destructive of arts, of industry, of private morals and public order, as extirpating even the Christian religion among them, and reducing them to the condition of savages and rebels, disgraceful to humanity, and formidable to the state. Having traced the progress and effects of those laws from the revolution to 1779; let me now ask you, said he, how have those laws affected the Protestant subject and the Protestant constitution? In that interval were they free? Did they possess that liberty which they denied to their brethren? No, Sir, where there are inhabitants, but no people, there can be no freedom unless there be a spirit, and what may be called a pull in the people; a free government cannot be kept steady or fixed in its seat. You had indeed a government, but it was planted in civil dissention, and watered in civil blood, and whilst the virtuous luxuriance of its branches aspired to Heaven, its infernal roots shot downward to their congenial regions, and were intertwined in Hell. Your ancestors thought themselves the oppressors of their fellow-subjects, but they were only their jailors, and the justice of Providence would have been frustrated, if their own slavery had not been the punishment of their vice and their folly. But, said he, are these facts for which we must appeal to history? You all remember the year one thousand seven hundred and seventy-nine. What were you then? Your constitution, without resistance, in the hands of the British parliament; your trade in many parts extinguished, in every part coerced. So low were you reduced to beggary and servitude, as to declare, that unless the mercy of England was extended to your trade, you could not subsist. Here you have an infallible test of the ruinous influence of those laws in the experience of a century; of a constitution surrendered, and commerce utterly extinct. But can you learn nothing on this subject from the events that followed? In 1778, you somewhat relaxed the severity of those laws, and improved, in some degree, the condition of the Catholics. What was the consequence, even of a partial union with your countrymen? The united efforts of the two bodies restored that constitution which had been lost by their separation. In 1782, you became free. Your Catholic brethren shared the danger of the conflict, but you had not justice or gratitude to let them share the fruits of the victory. You suffered them to relapse into their former insignificance, and depression. And let me ask you, has it not fared with you according to your deserts? Let me ask you, if the parliament of Ireland, can boast of being now less at the feet of the British minister, than at that period it was of the British parliament? Here he observed on the conduct of the Administration for some years past, in the accumulation of public bur-

dens and parliamentary influence; but, said he, it is not the mere encrease of debt; it is not the creation of one hundred and ten placemen and pensioners that forms the real cause of the public malady. The real cause is the exclusion of your people from all influence upon the representative. The question therefore is, whether you will seek your own safety in the restoration of your fellow subjects, or whether you will chuse rather to perish than to be just? He then proceeded to examine the objections to a general incorporation of the Catholics. On general principles, no man could justify the deprivation of civil rights on any ground but that of forfeiture for some offence. The papist of the last century might forfeit his property for ever, for that was his own, but he could not forfeit the rights and capacities of his unborn posterity. And let me observe, said he, that even those laws against the offender himself, were enacted while injuries were recent, and while men were not unnaturally alarmed by the consideration of a French monarchy, a pretender, and a pope; things that we now read of, but can see no more. But are they disaffected to liberty? On what ground can such an imputation be supported? Do you see any instance of any man's religious theory governing his civil or political conduct? Is popery an enemy to freedom? Look to France, and be answered. Is Protestantism necessarily its friend? You are Protestants, look to yourselves, and be refuted. But look further: Do you find even the religious sentiments of sectaries marked by the supposed characteristics of their sects? Do you find that a Protestant Briton can be a bigot with only two sacraments, and a Catholic Frenchman a Deist, admitting seven? But you affect to think your property in danger by admitting them into the state. That has been already refuted, but you have yourselves refused your own objection. Thirteen years ago you expressed the same fear, yet you made the experiment; you opened the door to landed property, and the fact has shewn the fear to be without foundation.

But another curious topic has been stated again; the Protestant ascendancy is in danger. What do you mean by that word? Do you mean the right, and property, and dignities of the church? If you do, you must feel they are safe. They are secured by the law, by the coronation oath, by a Protestant parliament, a Protestant king, a Protestant confederated nation. Do you mean the free and protected exercise of the Protestant religion? You know it has the same security to support it. Or do you mean the just and honourable support of the numerous and meritorious clergy of your own country, who really discharge the labours and duties of the ministry? As to that, let me say, that if we felt on that subject as we ought, we should not have so many men of talents and virtues struggling under the difficulties of their scanty pittance, and feeling the melancholy conviction that no virtues or talents can give them any hope of advancement. If you really

mean the preservation of every right and every honour that can dignify a Christian priest, and give authority to his function, I will protect them as zealously as you. I will ever respect and revere the man who employs himself in diffusing light, hope, and consolation. But if you mean by ascendancy the power of persecution, I detest and abhor it. If you mean the ascendancy of an English school over an Irish university, I cannot look upon it without aversion. An ascendancy of that form raises to my mind a little greasy emblem of stall-fed theology, imported from some foreign land, with the graces of a lady's maid, the dignity of a side table, the temperance of a larder, its sobriety the dregs of a patron's bottle, and its wisdom the dregs of a patron's understanding, brought hither to devour, to degrade, and to defame. Is it to such a thing you would have it thought that you affixed the idea of the Protestant ascendancy? But it is said, admit them by degrees, and do not run the risque of too precipitate an incorporation. I conceive both the argument and the fact unfounded. In a mixed government, like ours, an increase of the democratic power can scarcely ever be dangerous. None of the three powers of our constitution act singly in the line of its natural direction; each is necessarily tempered and diverted by the action of the other two: and hence it is, that though the power of the crown has, perhaps, far transcended the degree to which theory might confine it, the liberty of the British constitution may not be in much danger. An increase of power to any of the three acts finally upon the state, with a very diminished influence, and therefore, great indeed must be that increase in any one of them which can endanger the practical balance of the constitution. Still, however, I contend not against the caution of a gradual admission. But let me ask you, can you admit them any otherwise than gradually? The striking and melancholy symptom of the public disease is, that if it recovers at all it can be only through a feeble and lingering convalescence. Yet even this gradual admission your Catholic brethren do not ask, save under every pledge and every restriction, which your justice and wisdom can recommend to your adoption.

He concluded with calling on the House to consider the necessity of acting with a social and conciliatory mind. That contrary conduct may perhaps protract the unhappy depression of our country, but a partial liberty cannot long subsist. A divided people cannot long subsist. With infinite regret must any man look forward to the alienation of three millions of our people, and to a degree of subserviency and corruption in a fourth; I am sorry, said he, to think it is so very easy to conceive, that in case of such an event the inevitable consequence would be, an union with Great Britain. And if any one desires to know what that would be, I will tell him. It would be the emigration of every man of consequence from Ireland; it would be the partici-

pation of British taxes without British trade ; it would be the extinction of the Irish name as a people. We should become a wretched colony, perhaps leased out to a company of Jews, as was formerly in contemplation, and governed by a few tax-gatherers and excisemen, unless possibly you may add fifteen or twenty couple of Irish members, who might be found every session sleeping in their collars under the manger of the British minister.

MR. BARRINGTON, alluding to what had been advanced by Mr. Curran, said, there seems but little difference of opinion as to the principles of this bill ; that is, as to the principle of partial toleration ; and were I inclined to enter into a general discussion of the question, the lateness of the hour forbids me to trespass on the indulgence of the House. I shall therefore briefly, but firmly, state the extent and outline of my sentiments on that great subject ; and I am only induced to do so from the extraordinary turn which this debate has taken, and the ingenious and artful insinuations of an honourable member. Insinuations studied for the obvious purpose of sowing the seeds of dissatisfaction between the Government of this country and the Roman Catholic body, and imputing to false motives and false principles, the conduct of every gentleman who is attached, as well to the prosperity as to the government of this country, one yet too wise or too consistent to be connected with the honourable member or his colleagues. His speech this night seemed most strongly tinged by those tragi-comic scenes, perfectly adapted to the days of ancient Shakespeare. The honourable member's flights of fancy soaring above reason, and his lamentations sinking below it, bear a strong semblance to two statues which adorn the gates of bedlam, the one as raging, the other as melancholy, mad.

But frantic as the honourable member may be, I cannot tacitly suffer him to tell the people of this country, that if there be merit in a partial relaxation of the penal laws, and receiving the Roman Catholic body in some measure into the bosom of their country, he and his friends only act from pure or virtuous principles. I believe, and I say, that on a question of so gigantic an importance to this country, no minister of the crown would or could dictate to the conduct of any member of this House. There is no man whose bosom warms more to the principle of toleration than mine ; there is no man would sooner strike off those fetters which confine a great body of our countrymen and brethren to disqualifications and restraints, which the policy of the times and their own turbulence made necessary. But that must be done with caution ; our constitution must never fall a victim to our liberality. It is true that in this enlightened age. The spirit of toleration is seen arising from the grave of bigotry, it is true she points to universal benevolence, and to universal concord, and as she goes her course, illumines and humanizes the creation ; but that spirit must be re-

strained within the circle our constitution draws round her, the tolerating power must not destroy the principles assigned to its protection, and should that spirit of toleration, now hovering around this country, grow bold from encouragement, and dare assail the bulwark of our constitution, let her be chained again, and let her be sent back to the grave from whence she arose, and let her remain there, fettered and shackled by the hands of her own intemperance, 'till the great day of general emancipation shall give eternal liberty to all things. These are my general principles; I pledge myself no further. When the different parts of this bill come separately before a committee, they will be separately investigated, their consequence will be fully considered, and the determination will, I trust, be wisely made; 'till then I shall say no more, but to remark that one part of this bill I warmly approve of, home education: the better ranks of our Roman Catholic brethren are good and loyal subjects, the lower ranks are more doubtful, and perhaps both ranks owe many of the prejudices with which their political principles have been tainted, to the want of that domestic education which our own prejudices denied them.

Our Irish youth, sent to foreign seminaries, often imbibed the dangerous principles, as well as the ordinary education of the countries they passed through; immured within the limits of a monastery, taught to consider heretics as enemies, or arrayed in the military legions of a despot, whose word was law, whose mandate was coercion, they returned to their native soil as it were incruited in inveterate principles of monastic bigotry, or monarchical despotism; they felt themselves too stiff to concede to any government which had not a priest or a tyrant at its head. The foreign education of the present times would be worse; a nation whose hands are embued in sacrilege and massacre, are ill adapted to form the pliant principles of Irish youth; they would learn to despise the form of our government and the peace of our country, and would return home enamoured of anarchy, innovation and treason. Home education would obviate these evils; educated under our happy constitution, they would not learn to despise that constitution, they would learn to revere its principles; a social intercourse with their countrymen would give them a taste for domestic happiness, instead of foreign tumult, and the prejudices of the Catholic would be lost in the virtues of the citizen. I shall once more repeat that the principle of this bill, in my mind, should be adopted as far as our present constitution and ascendancy will admit, and no further; so far I am its friend, farther I am its enemy.

Mr. MARCUS BERESFORD voted for the committal of the bill, as did the Hon. F. HUTCHINSON.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER. I have too much love and respect for the Protestants of Ireland—I have too much love and respect for the Roman Catholics, to allude to subjects of animosity which have long slept; or by inflammatory harangues to kindle new commotion. Sir, I rise to rescue the Protestants of Ireland from the calumnies that have been thrown upon them; I rise to rescue the memory of our forefathers from the unjust and unfounded aspersions that have been thrown upon them; they have been described as cruel tyrants, for enacting laws to which they were compelled by self-defence and the necessity of the times, and which laws we, their posterity, relaxed in the most essential points the moment a favourable opportunity arrived. Was this tyranny in the Protestant gentlemen of Ireland? No, Sir, the Protestant gentlemen of Ireland are as liberal as they are brave.

Sir, I cannot forget that I am a Protestant myself; that I am born of Protestant parents; and that I am a member of the Protestant establishment; and therefore I will not hear Protestants degraded under colour of an invective against laws that we have repealed. I love as much as any man, and no man will more heartily consent to every reasonable act of toleration; but I do not chuse to hear the Protestants of Ireland accused, for what purpose I know not.

Let me caution gentlemen against listening to this general kind of reasoning, which, in every country where it has been adopted, has excited contention and produced ruin: let me caution them against that kind of reasoning which hands you over to an union or a civil war; either of which must end in blood, and bring destruction on this country.

There has been a kind of reasoning used this night, as if it was necessary the constitution of the country should be overturned, because the opposition have not been able to overturn the government. I very much doubt that the people of Ireland will subscribe to this doctrine, for however highly the opposition may value themselves, the people value the constitution more.

To my constituents, who sent me here, I owe my first duty, if they should say to me, "Give away our ascendancy, give away our elective franchise!" I should very reluctantly do it; but if they do not direct me to bestow their rights upon others, I call upon any man to say whether I am not a betrayer of my constituents rights, if I give them away unbidden.

Gentlemen have spoken much of prejudice and bigotry, as if Protestants were prejudiced bigots: Is there no prejudice on the other side? Is nothing to be given up but by Protestants? Let the Roman Catholics do away their prejudices, and it will be injustice indeed if we do not repeal our laws.

One observation more and I have done: The avowed object of this bill is to unite his majesty's subjects, and to promote con-

cord amongst them, preserving at the same time the Protestant ascendancy; every man, therefore, who suggests any measure of conciliation to be adopted in it, does a public good; but the man who knowingly incites the Roman Catholics to demand what he is convinced cannot be conceded, is an incendiary and an enemy to his country.

The House then resolved itself into a committee on the bill; Lord Delvin in the chair.

Mr. G. PONSONBY said that he had some observations to make on that part of the bill respecting education, and as it was now a very late hour, he wished that the chairman should report progress.

Mr. OGLE also expressed a wish, that the further consideration of the bill should be postponed to Monday.

Mr. SECRETARY HOBART said, there was no intention to precipitate the business, and in compliance with the wishes of gentlemen, he had no objection to the chairman reporting progress.

On the House being resumed,

LORD DELVIN reported progress, and got leave to sit again on Monday.

At half past twelve o'clock, the House adjourned to Monday.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1792.

Sir BOYLE ROCHE moved, that all the petitions relative to the Roman Catholic business, now lying on the table, be referred to the committee on the Roman Catholic bill.

Sir HERCULES LANGRISHE opposed the motion, as irregular and unparliamentary. The petition in question had been ordered to lie on the table, and the committee had no capacity whatever, either to entertain the petition or comply with its prayer. The bill before the House went to four points which were specified; but as to the elective franchise, the committee was incompetent to deliberate. The honourable mover of the motion, therefore, was irregular, his motion was unparliamentary, and as such it could not be complied with. He might move an instruction to the committee from the House, but the petition was totally irrelevant.

Sir BOYLE, admitting that he was irregular, withdrew his motion.

The Right Hon. DAVID LATOUCHE moved, that the petition of the Roman Catholic committee, presented to the House on Saturday night, should be read by the clerk.

It was signed by Edward Byrne and others, on the part of themselves and the Roman Catholics of Ireland. [See Saturday's debate.]

He then said, that if complied with he was of opinion, that it would affect our establishments in church and state. He therefore moved that the petition be rejected.

The Right Hon. Mr. OGLE seconded the motion.

Sir JOHN BLAQUIERE was sorry to disagree with his honourable friend's proposition. The petition had been received by an almost unanimous vote of the House; it was entered upon their journals, and therefore it required the deliberate answer of parliament. The Catholics have a right to be told, and to be told with temper and due respect, that they are not to expect that privilege of which they have been deprived by law, and therefore which they have no right to claim. He thought the question of the utmost importance, and upon which the future peace of this country would materially depend; and he therefore thought the petition would not be precipitately rejected, without mature deliberation, and clear reasons candidly assigned.

The Right Hon. Mr. BERESFORD wished for a fuller House, in order that the determination might be more general. He had seen in newspapers, which went farther than the journals of the House, several proposals signed by that same Edward Byrne, which specified that they should concede even more than was requested in the petition; in those papers it was proposed that they should not only grant the elective franchise, but enable the Roman Catholics to become magistrates and grand jurors. As the circumstances of the country would not admit of this, he was for at once letting the sense of the House become known; but he thought the present mode preferable, and was against going into a committee; the former was the least offensive mode of disposing of the business.

GENERAL CONYNCHAM, wishing most sincerely the petition might be fully examined, hoped the right honourable mover would postpone his motion until there should be a fuller House, in order that every man might have an opportunity of rising in his place, and declaring his sentiments, in order that the question might then be fully and finally decided, and that the Roman Catholics might no longer deceive themselves with hopes of receiving that which it was impossible for the House with safety to grant;

for the question was, whether they were to continue a Protestant parliament, or to become a Roman Catholic parliament? On the decision of that question, he trusted that there could not be a doubt in the House.

He had never heard the Protestant ascendancy properly described but once in that assembly, and by a gentleman [Mr. R. Sheridan] on the preceding Saturday night, who represented it to consist in a Protestant King, a Protestant House of Lords, and a Protestant House of Commons. This was a just definition; for so long as the latter two branches of the constitution were affected to the Protestant interest, they had little occasion to fear; and so long as the king continued a Protestant, there was no danger to fear the creation of Roman Catholic peers. For his part, he was as clearly convinced, as ever he was of any proposition in Euclid, that the consequence of extending any part of the elective franchise to the Roman Catholics, would be in a short time the establishment of a Roman Catholic parliament. In the newspapers he had read, that the intention was to allow Roman Catholics to vote for members to sit in that house, if possessed of 20l. per annum freehold property, in the same manner of Protestant 40s. freeholders. Were that the case, he would venture to affirm, that we should have more Roman Catholic than Protestant voters in Ireland. He possessed, he said, some property in the country, and he had the advantage of a seat in parliament for the space of forty years uninterruptedly, during which time he had uniformly voted in favour of the Roman Catholics. But on the present occasion he thought it his duty to speak out and declare with firmness he never could go so far as to grant them the elective franchise. He had himself a considerable estate in Ireland, and he had spent as much upon that estate as any gentleman in that assembly; but he was certain if the prayer of the petition was granted, there would be twenty Roman Catholic freeholders for one Protestant on the lands of Mount-Kennedy [the General's very elegant and highly improved estate in the county of Wicklow] It was now the duty of the House to speak out with determination; and if it was necessary, in the name of God, to draw swords at once and stake one interest and power against the other. He thought the proposition an absolute absurdity. He thought the present night a most critical one for Ireland. He saw the galleries of the House were full, and he was glad of it, that his sentiments might be the more openly avowed; and he thought every man in the House, whether Papist or Protestant, was bound in honour to rise in his place and state his sentiments.

Mr. FRENCH said, no man in this House regarded more firmly than he did the rights of the constitution; but he would not treat with indignity a petition signed by so many reputable names; he thought it should be coolly investigated and fairly answered.

The Hon. DENIS BROWNE observed, that the only question before the House was, whether the petition before them should be rejected or not? He firmly declared for his part, that he was against the rejection; for he could see no grounds for supporting such a measure. A petition was never rejected, unless it contained on the face of it something disrespectful to the House, which the present did not. He had, on the preceding night, represented the consequences of rejecting petitions of the people in Great Britain, as the practice had severed America from the empire. On the present occasion, he confessed he was surprised that the right honourable gentleman should bring forward so strong a motion as a rejection of the prayer of a decent petition, presented with all propriety, from a respectable number of subjects, without so much as a single argument or observation upon the measure.

He agreed with the honourable gentleman, [General Conyngham] that the Protestant ascendancy was to be preserved by a Protestant King, a Protestant House of Lords, and a Protestant House of Commons. But he had never heard that the Roman Catholics had solicited any thing contrary to this establishment. They had not requested to become members of parliament. It was true there were other things included in the petition, exclusive of enabling them to participate in some degree in the elective franchise. They had in contemplation to be rendered eligible for serving as magistrates and as grand jurors. As to these matters, every gentleman could judge for himself from a knowledge of his own country. He would answer for his own county that some of the most respectable gentlemen in it were Roman Catholics: the gentlemen who possessed the fee of the lands were principally absentees who resided in another kingdom. Of course this extension of favour must be an advantage to the country.

He denied that the privation of elective franchise arose from any civil or political demerit in the Roman Catholics; and recited an anecdote to shew how they had been originally deprived of the right of suffrage. There had been a contested election for the county of Galway, and Lord Dunkennell, son of the Earl of Clanricarde, was candidate in opposition to a Mr. Ormsby, a Protestant. And the Roman Catholics did return Mr. Ormsby to parliament, in defiance of his lordship. Upon this he polled up to town, and in resentment, through his interest with the Lord Lieutenant, he procured that act, the 5th of George the First, to be enacted, by which they lost their right of elective franchise.

He concluded with mentioning, that he thought the treating the petitions of loyal and peaceable subjects with indignity, as the present motion went to do, was the worst of all possible modes to be pursued.

Sir JAMES COTTER declared himself not for treating the petition of the Roman Catholics with indignity. But when they ex-

pressed a desire to participate in the elective franchise, he thought it the duty of the House to tell them they should not. The petition he conceived to be highly indecorous, because it was previously known that parliament could not accede to its prayer. This petition purported to be on the part of the Roman Catholics of Ireland. He would ask, how they could vouch that it was on the part of the Roman Catholics? And then they must be obliged to acknowledge that they had set up committees of correspondence, and had sent delegates to hold meetings in the capital, with a view of dictating to parliament what the Roman Catholics would condescend to accept from them.

Another part of the petition to which he conceived a strong objection was, that expression which appealed to the justice of parliament. By appealing to their justice, it was tacitly implied that some of their rights were withheld. To this he would never assent; for these rights, by the constitution, were forfeited, and were taken away by parliament he supposed, and after mature deliberation. It behoved the Roman Catholics to shew the same causes did not now exist, before he should consent to alter that policy. The sooner the House evinced their intention of rejecting the claim of the Roman Catholics to the elective franchise the better, as it would the sooner undeceive them.

Mr. MARCUS BERESFORD said, he had heard something asserted, as if the House was not disposed to receive the petition of the Roman Catholics. The fact was, that the petition had been received, was read, and ordered to lie on the table. This was all that parliament was bound to do with any petition. And more could not be expected from them to one which, on the very face of it appeared to be subversive of the Protestant ascendancy in Ireland. He deprecated this idea with much warmth and indignation. There was another petition from the inhabitants of Belfast, of the same tendency. He was ready to meet gentlemen in fair debate upon the merits of both. But he begged that his right honourable friend [Mr. Lafouche] would so couple them in his motion, that they should experience the same fate.

Sir BOYLE ROCHE requested that the names which were annexed to the petition might be read. If that were not complied with, he should repeat them from memory, as he meant to observe upon them. Who were they, he asked, who affected to be the representatives of the Roman Catholics of Ireland? Were there amongst them any of the ancient nobility, or of the gentry of Ireland? Was there a single man of respectability or character? No, not one. There was indeed, Mr. Edward Byrne, a sugar baker, a seller of wines and other commodities, and he was the first name, and put in the front of the battle. There was another, John Keogh; and who was he? Why, he was a retailer of poplins in

Dame-street. These men met over their porter to consider of commanding the government—they met at a chop-house, at Derham's chop-house in particular, where the former of them in his cups happened to dream that he was a nabob of Ireland. As to the rest of them, they were so obscure, that he could neither recollect nor describe them. Were these the representatives of the Roman Catholic nobility and gentry? No. Was there one respectable name amongst them? No. These fellows, he maintained, represented themselves, and misrepresented the Roman Catholics of Ireland. Neither the Catholic nobility, the Catholic gentry, nor the Catholic clergy, had any thing to do with it, and he considered it to be both an insolent and a degrading petition.

As to the Belfast petition, he observed that they had moved heaven and earth, in order to foment disturbance in the country. At the same time that they were framing this petition in behalf of their Roman Catholic brethren, they were holding a correspondence with the French National Assembly, while the Dublin petitioners were espousing the cause of a renegade, and entertaining a French democrat, who had fled from his own country, to infect this with the poison of his principles. This same John Keogh, had distributed several thousands of Payne's pamphlet through the country, and they were circulated by the petitioners. But the Roman Catholic nobility and gentry abhorred those abominations. No imputation could be laid at their door upon this head, and therefore he hoped that all reflections would rest where they ought, upon the scum of the earth. Shame and disgrace! Are such men the representatives of the Catholics of Ireland? No. The Roman Catholics are not involved in their misconduct. Their sentiments are not to be collected from a meeting composed of turbulent shop-keepers and shop-lifters, and for this reason he trusted that the House would not go into committee on the petition. In the year 1784, he recollected another committee like the present, it was the tarring and feathering committee, which was as much the representative of the Roman Catholics, as that which now affected to speak for them.

The Right Hon. Mr. BROWNLOW professed to rise with concern on the present occasion. He thought the resolution not only proper, but necessary at the present time. On Saturday night, when the petition was presented, he expected that some gentleman would rise and make a similar motion. He would have done so, but that he did not wish to obtrude himself on the House. While he said this, he declared that he was disposed to serve the Roman Catholics, but not to such an extent; for the conduct of that body in the reign of the Stuarts, particularly in the time of James the Second, was such, that they could never be trusted with power in Ireland.

He denied that the House treated the petition with disrespect, even if they should proceed to reject it: They had given it all the attention which petitions in the usual course are accustomed to receive. And whenever an extension of the elective franchise was proposed to the Roman Catholics, he trusted that in that House they would neither deliberate nor hesitate; but at once give the question a positive rejection.

Sir HENRY CAVENDISH conceived the question before the House to be this—Will you reject a petition praying for an extension of the elective franchise to the Roman Catholics, or not? It was a self-evident proposition, which, in a Protestant parliament, precluded debate. Its rejection, therefore, should meet with his hearty concurrence.

Sir THOMAS OSBORNE said, he was clearly of opinion that the matter of the petition was just. He was inclined to think, that the time had arrived in which it was proper to impart the elective franchise to our Roman Catholic brethren. In saying this he could not be supposed to speak from prejudice, for he was descended from an ancient Protestant family, who had been employed in times more critical than the present in the defence of their country, and that at a period when many of the ancestors of those who affected such fears for the Protestant ascendancy would not be found to have been their cotemporaries in parliament.

The Right Hon. Mr. CUFFE thought the motion before the House was in itself a very simple proposition. It was, whether they would or would not grant the elective franchise to the Roman Catholics? This question involved another, of no little importance, which was, whether they would have a Protestant or Roman Catholic parliament? He should not skulk from the question. He would put it fairly and fully, and he would tell the Roman Catholics that he would not grant them the elective franchise, either now or at any other time. He would give them what the bill pending proposed—but no more. While he declared this resolution, he avowed that he had on all occasions voted for the relief of the Roman Catholics in the course of his parliamentary conduct.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL declared, that the wish of his heart was to extend to the Roman Catholics every advantage which they could enjoy, consistent with the safety of the establishments in church and state. But he would never give a vote inconsistent with their safety. He could not conceive that the petitioners were treated with disrespect if the petition was rejected, after it had undergone the usual form. He admitted that it was not necessary to enquire, whether the prayer of it was made by men-

chants, shop-keepers, or others. It was enough that it came from our fellow-subjects and countrymen; for by that it was entitled to every attention. It ought to be carefully considered, for its consequences might affect our constitution, our religion, nay, our lives. And should the petition be rejected, he trusted that the light in which the Roman Catholics would view it would be, that the requisition was refused because they held it not at that time to be proper to give it, and not with a design of meeting their prayers contemptuously.

The Hon. Mr. ANNESLEY thought every man was now called on to declare candidly his sentiments on a subject of so much importance, and he for his own part should not skulk from the part he felt himself bound to take. He did not like to reject the petition because it was brought into the House accompanied by humility and respect. He did not like to reject it abruptly on account of the names signed to it, many of which he knew to be highly respectable, but he never could agree to grant what the petition required, because he was certain if he did, it, would ultimately and inevitably tend to the establishment of a Papist House of Commons.

Mr. STUART (of Killymoon) said, that when the prayer of a petition was such as the House could not possibly grant, it was their duty at once to reject it. He trusted that they would do so in the present instance. If they went into a committee upon the question of granting the elective franchise, it would imply that there was a probability of carrying it into effect. There was none. For he was clear in his own mind that compliment would lead to the introduction of Roman Catholics into that House, for the natural wish of a Roman Catholic constituent must be to have a Roman Catholic representative.

Mr. WESTBY would go so far as the bill for the relief of the Roman Catholics. If further claims were made he would not only resist them, but be one of the first to move for revoking the concessions formerly made to them.

Mr. BLAKE (of Adfry) thought the Roman Catholics entitled at least to respect and liberality from parliament.

Mr. BARRINGTON was surprised how any man in that House could come forward with a petition, bearing on the face of it a requisition which it was impossible for the House to comply with. He loved the Roman Catholics, but he loved the constitution better, and therefore he would not grant a power incompatible with the safety of that constitution, and he thought better for the House to tell them in a manly stile they could never expect to receive such a concession. He would treat them as brothers, but

then as younger brothers, and would not sell his birth-right to them for a mess of pottage. Had the Roman Catholics come to this House earlier in the session, and thrown themselves on the generosity of their Protestant brethren, he doubted not but indulgence would have extended to them beyond the latitude of the bill before the House; but now it became necessary for the House to be guarded in its liberality.

Mr. OGLE. I believe it is unnecessary for me to say, I will not vote for Roman Catholic franchise. I think the petition ought to be rejected, for if it is not, it may imply that we admit the principle of the petition.

I never in my life was so much delighted as I am at this moment; I glory in the principles which gentlemen have spoken. I think this will be a glorious night for the Protestants of Ireland; there are two modes by which you may on this occasion immortalize your names, either by addressing his majesty, and declaring your firm determination to maintain the Protestant ascendancy, or by a preamble to the bill, which, notwithstanding the unreasonable attacks that are made upon you, you have the kindness and the benignity to grant.

The Hon. Mr. LOFTUS supported Mr. Ogle. He declared his own sentiments perfectly coincided with his right honourable colleague, and he knew he was expressing the wishes of his constituents.

The Hon. Mr. MAXWELL had some doubts as to assenting to the bill for relief of the Roman Catholics, but they were now done away. He had seen sufficient proof of the spirit and magnanimity of the House. The concessions about to be made could not now be imputed to motives of pusillanimity, they could now be supposed to proceed from nothing but the benignity of parliament and the irresistible impulse of humanity and commiseration.

Mr. BROWNE (of the College) said, his sentiments upon the whole of this business might appear rather singular. His opinion was, that it would be wise in Government when they saw certain declaratory publications from bodies of Roman Catholics that must vex any moderate man, not to bring forward any bill at all now, but to postpone it for another session. But, now that the bill was brought forward, to some parts of it he should take an opportunity of stating some objections. He professed himself rather what might be called a bigotted Protestant so far as regarded the principles of the constitution. He had never seen a Roman Catholic until he was sixteen years old, and he then considered him a prodigy; but he had since by intercourse with many respectable men of that persuasion got rid of his prejudices; whatever were his

opinions with regard to the bill, he was not prepared to go so far as the petition required; but though the House might now see it expedient to grant the franchise to Roman Catholics, he thought no man could be prepared to say we would never grant that privilege, or bind down future parliaments, whose wisdom would no doubt be directed by the expediency of times and circumstances. He hoped there was no compromise formed for passing the bill on the ground of such a preclusion.

Here Mr. OGLE rose to say, if the honourable member alluded to the preamble he had mentioned, the idea of compromise was inapplicable, as no man, not even his most respected friends in that House, were acquainted with the purport of his preamble.

Mr. BROWNE explained his idea, that it seemed to be a general agreement amongst members, not to oppose the bill, but to reject the petition.

Sir EDWARD NEWENHAM said, the motion for rejecting the petition, was, in his mind, rather unusual; the petition of the subject ought ever to be treated with respect, and therefore referred to a committee; which committee, having debated thereon, would report their opinion. That he was decidedly against granting the elective franchise to the Roman Catholics; confident that such a privilege would entirely destroy the present establishment in church and state; yet he would vote against the rejection of that petition, unless the merits of it were first canvassed in a committee.

Mr. FORBES. I rise to express my concern and astonishment at the favourable reception, which the House has this night given to an attempt to excite ridicule and contempt against the subscribers to the petition now under your consideration; whom both from the respectability of their characters, and their consequence in the commercial world, it is equally our duty and our interest to protect and cultivate. Notwithstanding this unfavourable disposition of the House to hear any argument against the motion for the rejection of this petition, I shall not hesitate to affirm, that the mode of treating it which we are urged to adopt, appears to me not to be warranted by the usual proceedings of this House. I do admit that if the petition had been presented when there was not a full attendance, or if the substance and object of it had not been fairly and correctly stated by the member who introduced it; or if the House had in any degree been taken by surprise on the subject, it would not have been contrary to the practice of parliament to have proposed the motion made by the right honourable member; but the present case is directly the reverse of that which I have stated, this pe-

tion was presented in a very full House; and such precaution was used before it was received, that not relying on the usual correctness of the statements of the honourable member who presented it, the House required that he should read every word of the petition; and after being possessed of the object and prayer of it, unanimously resolved, that it should be received and lie on the table. The friends of this motion profess that they do not intend any disrespect to the petitioners, but only adopt this measure, as a mode of declaring to them a fixed determination of not granting to persons of their description any participation in the elective franchise. I cannot conceive that such a material departure from parliamentary usage respecting a petition which does not militate against the privileges of the House, and is perfectly consistent with the privilege which all descriptions of our fellow-subjects enjoy, of petitioning parliament for the repeal of any law of any nature or tendency whatsoever, can admit of any interpretation, but that of disrespectful treatment; and if we suffer the petition to remain on the table, without being referred to a committee, and pass the bill now depending without the insertion of any elective qualification, no person can deny that such a procedure must operate as a sufficient indication of our determination not to grant the prayer of that petition. I object to this measure, as it subjects the House to the suspicion of going out of their way to injure the feelings of their Roman Catholic brethren; and it militates against the great object of the bill now before the House, the conciliation of the affections of the Roman Catholics, and the promotion of a firm and permanent union of all descriptions of people in this country, in support of the common interest of Ireland. If we advert to the conduct of the British parliament, we shall find more respect shewn to American resistance than Catholic loyalty. Before the declaration of independence, the petitions of the Americans were never rejected by the houses of parliament; and even after that event, the petitions from congress to the king were received by him, and afterwards laid before both houses and taken into consideration; and yet the object of those petitions was to subvert the supremacy of the British parliament.

Though I am adverse to the present motion, I do think that the bill of the honourable baronet is sufficiently ample in respect to the advantages it purports to confer on the Roman Catholics; because I have always considered it most expedient that the extension of privilege to our Catholic fellow-subjects should be gradual and progressive; thus every relaxation of the penal laws must operate as a temperate reform, without exciting the apprehensions of their Protestant brethren; but as the members of the House are called on this night to speak out, I shall without any reserve declare, that according to the best judgment I could form on the subject, a farther extension of privilege, or an ad-

mission of the Roman Catholics to a reasonable and moderate participation in the elective franchise, could be effected without endangering the Protestant ascendancy, which I shall ever most zealously maintain; I conceive no farther declaration on this subject necessary, to evince the attachment to the constitution, of a man, who has sacrificed more than any member in this House in support of that constitution, and the consistency of his public conduct. Yet as the decided opinion of the House, and the present temper of the Protestants of Ireland are adverse to the adoption of such a measure at this period, I am certain that the Roman Catholics will submit with that respectful deference, which they have so repeatedly testified for the determinations of the legislature of this kingdom, and the wishes of their Protestant brethren; reposing a well founded confidence, I trust, in that growth of public sentiment in their favour which, I am happy to observe, by a fortunate concurrence of circumstances, is daily accelerating; but in order to inspire precaution in some gentlemen, who appear to act at present under the influence of their apprehensions for the safety of the Protestant ascendancy, I beg leave to remind them that they were actuated by the same apprehensions in 1778, when they opposed a bill at that time introduced into this House for the relaxation of the penal laws against Catholics; yet experience has since proved that those apprehensions were groundless; and gentlemen who, in 1778, resisted the measure of enabling Roman Catholics to acquire estates in fee simple, in 1782 co-operated with the original friends to that measure, of whom I was one, in restoring to the Catholics the right of acquiring such a dominion in property; and we now are all convinced that the laws passed at these periods, instead of proving injurious to Ireland, most eminently contributed to the prosperity of this island, by adding strength to its yeomanry, and by restoring to this country some of its most ancient and respectable families, the property and talents of whom must otherwise have been devoted to the service of a foreign and perhaps hostile power.

If gentlemen advert to the conduct of the Protestants of England last year, respecting the repeal of the test-act, they must feel a stronger conviction of the necessity of guarding their minds against the influence of the apprehensions I mention; though the experience of twelve years has proved that the repeal of this act has not been attended with any bad consequences in this kingdom, yet the English Protestants have resisted the adoption of a similar measure, with all the vehemence and ardour, which we might expect they would have displayed against a direct attempt to subvert their constitution in church and state; and one of the most enlightened of the clergy of their established church, in reply to the argument proving the innoxiousness of the measure from the experience of Ireland, has

asserted that every person informed in the political history of this kingdom knows, that Government in 1780 consented to the repeal of the test-act under the terror of a Spanish invasion; an assertion which every man, who recollects the number of our volunteer army, and the union of the people at that period, knows to be erroneous.

I must advert to a misconception, which appears to have prevailed very generally in this House, that an admission of Roman Catholics to a participation in the elective franchise must affect very materially the settlement of our constitution, at the revolution of 1688.

If gentlemen will consult our history, they will find that there was not any settlement of the constitution of Ireland at that period; the security of our religion and property were the benefits which the Protestants of this kingdom derived from the revolution; essential and important advantages, which justly entitle the event to commemoration; but the endeavours of a certain description of men in this House to obtain a participation in the benefits of the settlement of the constitution of England at the revolution, and in those measures for the security of the rights and liberties of the subject, which grew out of that settlement, have been constantly and successfully resisted by the present British minister; the act, by which the Roman Catholics were deprived of the elective franchise, was passed at a period long subsequent to the revolution; it did not originate in any delinquency of the people of that persuasion, the law was enacted after an experience for twenty-five years of the peaceable conduct of the Roman Catholics; a conduct, which they have since uniformly pursued; untainted by the example of two rebellions in the sister kingdom; and when the short term of eighteen years was deemed sufficient to expiate the guilt of Scotch disloyalty; the Irish Catholic may with propriety and justice plead his allegiance and his penalties for a century, as an atonement for the crimes of his ancestors. In order to preserve unanimity, I wish that we should refrain from any explicit declarations respecting our conduct in future on the subject of Catholic claims; yet we ought not to extinguish hope in the minds of our fellow-subjects; on the contrary, let us hold out to our Roman Catholic brethren a participation in our constitution, as a prize to be obtained by a firm perseverance in their allegiance to the Government of the country, and by unequivocal proofs of their affection for and attachment to the principles of the constitution. The period for adjudging this prize cannot now be ascertained; it must depend on the experience of the effects of the law proposed to be passed this session, and on the circumstances of the country.

Lord HEADFORD said, he trusted there was no man in that House a more decided or stronger friend to the Protestant interest and ascendancy in Ireland than he was, or would on every occasion go farther, or sacrifice more to maintain and uphold it; consequently he would certainly vote for the rejection of the petition then before the House. He begged leave however, to differ with the honourable gentleman who spoke last, that the rejection of this petition would in any wise affect or tend to prejudice the bill at present depending for the relief of the Roman Catholics; he considered them as utterly unconnected; the petition, he looked upon as the production of those men whose inflammatory and seditious publications had with justice drawn down upon them the obloquy and censure of every sensible man and loyal subject in the kingdom, let him be of what persuasion he might. The bill he considered to be founded on an enlightened policy, calculated to confer favours and impart, as far as prudence will allow, the blessings of our invaluable constitution, to a numerous, a respectable, and a loyal body of our fellow subjects; as such it had his warmest and best wishes; and he hoped that when that bill did go into committee nothing would be tacked to it which might in any way lessen the favour meant to be conferred. He intreated the House to consider what it was that enhanced the value of a favour? Why most certainly the manner of granting it. When the parliament of Ireland is disposed to make concessions they should do it with magnanimity and good grace; when they refuse, let it be with firmness and dignity.

The Right Hon. BURTON CONYNGHAM defended the proposed mode of rejecting the petition, as perfectly parliamentary; with regard to the extension of the franchise required, he acknowledged some prejudices for the policy established by our ancestors.

The parliaments of twelve successive reigns, from Henry VIII. and Elizabeth, to Charles I. and II. had passed acts restrictive on the Roman Catholics, and if such sentiments had been growing ever since the reformation, he thought it dangerous now to trust persons towards whom the wisdom of ancestry had used such caution. The principle of Great Britain in this and a variety of other privileges, with regard to offices and qualifications, was a principle of preclusion even towards her Protestant subjects. The greater part of the electors of England enjoyed their franchise to the preclusion of the rest of the nation, in certain qualifications of property or corporate right. Now if such precautions were necessary to the principle of property, were not some necessary towards the principle of mind? He thought it would be extremely unwise to grant the franchise to men whom he was taught to believe held principles injurious

to the constitution; and until they should come forward and disavow those principles, it would be utterly unwise to allow them to participate therein. But, said he, whenever they shall come forward with such a disavowal I shall be foremost amongst those who divest themselves of prejudice, and among the foremost to grant them every privilege of the constitution.

Mr. BUSHE said, he was anxious that the motives on which the petition should be rejected might not be misunderstood. It seemed the almost general sense of gentlemen, that they meant no more by rejecting the petition than to refuse the prayer of it—a participation of the elective franchise. His own opinion had been best expressed by the Attorney General, who had said that he would not now agree to the prayer of that petition. I not only, said he, reprobate the doctrine of attempting to bind future parliaments, but even of binding ourselves; parliament must be ever open to deliberation. The right of legislation, and the duty to make at all times the best laws which the times shall admit of, are inseparable, and commensurate. The constitution which could not give us perfect wisdom, gave us the best thing of which the fallible nature of man is capable; it gave us a legislature bound to govern by the circumstances of the times; it gave us actors suited to the shifting scene, and a constant duty to give to the people the best suggestions of our diligence and our intellect. The Roman Catholic has a right to the attention of parliament and to every variation in the laws which can be suggested by its wisdom, judging of men and of circumstances as they appear in all its changes. By performing this great and original duty of legislation, and by that alone, we can preserve the Protestant ascendancy, for it is by that we can justify it. The right and the duty of legislation cannot be suspended. The principle is as broad as legislation itself, but to a representative assembly it is peculiarly applicable. Can it be denied that we owe some respect to the opinion of constituents either to our own respectively, or to the collective voice of the constituents of the kingdom? There is a daily change in the constituents themselves, and those who are not changed, have a right to change their opinions. The Roman Catholic has a right to recommend himself to his Protestant fellow-subject by all that is good, and all that is improved in his conduct. The Protestant has a right to observe and to reward that conduct by his recommendation of the Roman Catholic to the more favourable opinion of parliament, and to deny this capacity of the one to deserve, and of the other to reward, is to deny one of the most valuable rights of both, and to destroy one of the best bonds of human society. What right has one man to prejudge what another may observe to-morrow? We are bound to hear him, and if there be any thing in his mind which unfits him for a participation of our

privileges, we are to hope for his improvement, and to adapt our laws to its progress. The laws have given us power, but nature has not given us fore-knowledge. To say otherwise is to ascribe to ourselves the prescience of a God, and the organs of the deaf adder. The conduct of a part of the Catholics at the present period has indeed been indiscreet in the extreme. But I believe they themselves perceive the effects of their indiscretion. Nothing that any of them have done, nothing that any of them could do, shall make me subscribe to a doctrine which I reprobate, or prevent me from opposing it at greater length, if it should be either proposed or implied in any preamble which may be offered to us. What has been observed by an honourable member [Mr. Forbes] that to let a petition lie unheeded on your table as a common mode of disregarding the prayer of that petition, is certainly conformable to our frequent practice. But I think it better to reject a petition at once, than to refer it to a committee, with a fixed resolution to reject it there. The opinion of the House seems to fluctuate between these two methods of treating the petition. I think that to refer it to a committee with such a determination, would be but a solemn mockery. In offering to reject the petition, I mean no more than to say, I do not now agree to the prayer of it.

The Right Hon. JOHN O'NEILL confessed his regret that the petition had ever come before the House; but since it had been received, he should be sorry to see it marked on their journals by any thing like censure, which would be the case if abruptly rejected.

Sir JOHN BLAQUIERE was glad the petition had been thus brought into discussion, as he was still of opinion the treatment it should this night receive would most materially interest the future peace of this country. He was of opinion the petition ought not to go into committee, but then he also thought the reason why should be candidly assigned, and this reason was because the prayer of the petition asked what a Protestant parliament could never grant, consistently with the safety of a Protestant state; saying therefore it could not be granted now, would be to cherish hopes which he trusted never would be realized. The Catholics, aided by able men, had drawn up this petition in terms with which they conceived it impossible for the House to refuse compliance; they "relied on its justice, and they promised that, grateful for past favours, they would still be so in proportion to such further indulgence as parliament might deem wise"; but still he thought the discretion of the House should be governed by a consideration of the disparity of numbers in the two religions, and he

quoted the parish in which he himself resided, in which there were 15,000 Roman Catholics, and himself the only Protestant.

In Paris and its vicinity, he observed, that the Protestant ministers, when that country had a government and constitution, were permitted to discharge the functions of their office with perfect freedom, because there their number was small in proportion to those of the established religion; but in the southern parts of the kingdom, Languedoc, &c. where the Hugonots were more numerous than the Catholics, if a Protestant minister was found reading abroad, he was hanged the next morning.

Mr. EGAN. I had the honour, Mr. Chairman, to present that petition to this House: it was received by the concurrence of a majority, but if it is now to be rejected without any sort of investigation, I shall have to lament as a misfortune the circumstance of its coming before the House under my introduction. But, Sir, I shall oppose the motion of the right honourable gentleman, whom I most highly respect, because I think it militates against the order and decorum of parliament. If I thought it contained a single requisition having the slightest tendency to the subversion of the Protestant religion in church or state, there is not a man in this House who would more firmly oppose it than I would, but seeing no such tendency, fearing no such danger, I shall vote for its committal.

I am not fond, Sir, of speaking of myself, but on this occasion I will say, that from my earliest rudiments of education, I was taught to entertain a bigotted reverence for the Protestant religion, to the prejudice of popery; but, Sir, if by the experience of years that bigotry is removed, and my mind liberalized by a more intimate knowledge of society, I hope it will not, under these considerations, be suspected that I would offer to this House a measure disrespectful to its dignity or subversive to its principles.

When I brought in the petition, I used a language, I trust, not unbecoming a member of this House: when I was called on to present it, I did not pledge myself to support its requisition; and when called on to state its objects, I did not hazard from mere memory, any obscure statement that might be suspected to conceal any lurking demands, but read it fully and fairly to the House, together with the names that were signed; names, Sir, of citizens amongst the most respectable in your metropolis, of traders amongst the most wealthy and important in your country; and let me say, Sir, as a lesson to indiscretion, that the sordid invectives attempted to be thrown against them this night will, instead of an odium, prove a panegyric on their characters; and let me conjure a Protestant House of Commons not to adopt a measure which shall sanction such invective.

Sir, in presenting this petition I conceived myself as doing no more than my bounden duty as a member of this House, in complying with the requisition of three millions of my countrymen and fellow subjects in the realm; it was not only received with scarcely a negative, and ordered to lie on your table, but has been most ably supported by men with whom, if I could stoop to adulation, I would say it was my pride to be included even in error—men whose support of the measure ought in my mind to sanctify its adoption.

The right honourable member who has brought forward this motion, Sir, is a man for whose character and principles I hold the highest veneration; and I scruple not to say that in most matters, if to concur with him, rendered it necessary to forfeit the conviction of my own understanding, I would do it; but give me leave to say, Sir, that I trust the day is not far distant, when he and his friends will see their motives are founded on misapprehension.

I wish to be informed, Sir, if, when a petition has been received by unanimous assent, and is so recorded upon your journals, whether it is consistent with parliamentary order to reject it without investigation, or any cause alledged? For my own part, Sir, I should think the motion would have been more orderly if it was for expunging the petition from your journals; in this matter, Sir, I speak with the greatest deference.

But, Sir, after all, is rejection a wise measure towards the petition of three millions of subjects, breathing humility, loyalty, affection, and attachment to you, to their king, to their country and to the state? This petition, Sir, is not a demand of the elective franchise only: it is an humble solicitation that the wisdom of this House would be pleased to remove certain disabilities, and to extend to them some participation in the blessings of the constitution. Yet you are this moment going to reject this petition, and in the very next to pass a bill acquiescing in a very considerable part of the prayer of the petition!

One would think, Sir, the Roman Catholics had been guilty of some new act of criminality calling for pointed censure; but if we look into their conduct, and consult the language of their petition, we shall find no ground for such conjecture; we shall find in it nothing but the humble language of a respectable body of people submitting with patience to those very grievances from which they intreat relief. But we are told, Sir, that the legislature of this country can never agree in the prayer of that petition; can never cede to the Roman Catholics the franchise of election, nor one of those various other immunities which their Protestant fellow subjects enjoy; and we are told of preambles, and final resolutions that shall fix boundaries to the claim of Catholics, and to the concessions of parliament!

But for God's sake, Sir, shall we, who are literally clad in mortality, presume to limit the wisdom of posterity, or circumscribe the rights or the liberality of future parliaments? Let us rather deprecate such acts of legislative folly, and not arrogate to ourselves a privilege which we deny to our predecessors. Such a piece of arrogance would be an eternal reflection on the wisdom of the House of Commons, and its folly must be obvious to the meanest capacity. What! Sir, at a time we are passing an act of parliament to soothe the long suffering of the Roman Catholic, to attach his allegiance to the state, and his industry to the country; is it wise in this House to declare, that, be their deserts what they may, they shall notwithstanding, be for ever cut off from the rights of men! Why, Sir, this would be to say to the manly and constitutional ambition of three millions of Irish subjects; exterminate yourselves, your talents, your property, and your industry for ever from this country, in which you can never hope for admission to the blessings of a free constitution, or the ordinary rights of subjects! Is this the Protestant language and the Protestant principle for which you are ready to spill your blood? Or do you hold it consistent, in the very moment you are professing a wish to unite the affections of the people, thus to adopt the old principle of jealousy and division, which first distinguished English usurpation in this country, by shutting out the Irish people from the English constitutional pale. It is to say to the loyal Roman Catholic of Ireland, Bring with you all your merits, all your loyalty, all your fidelity, industry, and virtue, yet we will put the extinguisher of prophecy upon your hopes, and darken every ray of your expectations, by the gloom of despair.

A right honourable member has said there are two ways of immortalizing ourselves on this occasion; I agree with him: we may do it by our wisdom and liberality, or by our bigotry and folly; but I am for preferring the former mode.

Let me ask the ministers of the country, while they are seconding the measure brought forward in this House by an honourable baronet high in their confidence, which they have advised, will they be weak enough to sanction, with the opinion of Government, such a principle as shall for ever exclude three-fourths of the people of Ireland from the rights of subjects, and tell them they shall never participate the blessings of our constitution?

For my own part, Sir, I am bound to declare, when I brought forward this petition, I was far from being actuated by seditious motives; convinced in my own mind of the principles and unshaken loyalty of that great and respectable body from whom it comes, I gave my sanction, with a view to their consolidation within the pale of the constitution, believing most

firmly that my success would prove the consolidation of Irish prosperity.

We have been told, Sir, that the Roman Catholics were deprived of the right of franchise under the principles of the constitution, as established at the revolution; but let me inquire whether ever such an infliction was held warrantable in that day? Let me vindicate the principles of our glorious revolution, that second Magna Charta, from a charge so unjust; and let me tell gentlemen that the elective franchise was not wrested from the Roman Catholics of Ireland, until fifty years after the revolution, and this at a time when there was not in their demeanour the smallest foundation for a pretence to justify so severe a measure. But, Sir, admitting for argument sake, that any such cause for disqualification did at any time exist, does it follow, that the effect must for ever continue, when the cause has ceased? That posterity shall for ever suffer for the errors of their ancestors, which they abjure? Or is it in the littleness of man, or the arrogance of legislature, to assume a power which even the Deity disclaims, and to perpetuate to succeeding generations the punishment of crimes long buried with the guilty?

The movers of this motion have raised in this country an honourable monument to their own names, in an endeavour to rescue from vice and intemperance the morals and the industry of the people; * and let me conjure them not now to sacrifice to the intemperance of a moment, the best incentives to the improvement of those morals, and of that industry; and let me also conjure this House to avoid an impolitical attempt to arrogate a power disgraceful to their own judgment, and insulting to posterity.

SOLICITOR GENERAL. If I had been fortunate enough to have caught the observation of the Chair at an earlier period of the evening, I should have hoped to have saved gentlemen trouble.

I congratulate the House on the spirit it has manifested in support of the Protestant ascendancy. I have heard with great deliberation what has been urged with great labour by the honourable member who has just sat down; and though I have industriously sat silent on this business from its first promulgation, I feel it my duty now to declare my sentiments.

Before I sit down, I shall offer to the consideration of the House a proposition which at the same time that it may appear more conciliatory than that which has been moved, may also seem

* Alluding to Mr. Latouche's motion in the House of Commons, in the session 1791, for suppressing the inordinate use of spirituous liquors among the lower orders of people.

adequate to the object of the right honourable mover, and to the persons of high consideration who sit near him: and if amongst them I should happen to carry with me the feelings and opinion of the right honourable member who had just now spoke, [Mr. O'Neill] I shall, at the same time that I avail myself of the consequence which awaits upon his illustrious descent, and still more illustrious character, give an indulgence to the impulse which I feel from the earliest and the most uninterrupted friendship, and of which I have reason to be proud. When I rise with such a proposition I do not fear the imputation of deserting the Protestant cause. In my humble walk of life I have made some successful struggles for the Protestant interest of Ireland, and I have great family obligations to it; I know that I am addressing a Protestant House of Commons; and when I look about and see who they are that surround me, I know that the Protestant cause of Ireland will not suffer in their hands. In such a case, I disdain giving an answer to the imputation, that I am acting under the mandate of a minister, however loved in private or most justly confided in by the public; but in such a case, I cannot afford to make so deep a sacrifice to any minister, as to risk my property, character, and every thing that is dear to a good citizen, by suffering a dangerous encroachment to be made on the immutable principles of the British constitution, which is the bulwark of our mutual strength. The old and steady bark may be sent adrift by the hurricane of folly; but whilst a fragment remains to float I will cling to it, and when it is doomed to sink, I hope I shall not survive it long.

The petition before you, and the persons who have subscribed it, are to be treated with respect: they have approached you with decorum, and their conduct should be discriminated, though the amount of what they ask cannot be granted. I would wish to convince them, that it is because we are a Protestant House of Commons, feeling the tolerant and moderate principles by which only civil liberty has been fostered and matured, we have attended to and wished to meliorate their situation, in despite of those officious and presumptuous men who call themselves their advocates, but never were their friends; and who have dared to grasp at them as the instruments of outrage, and involve the country in calamity and confusion. I know the dispositions of my countrymen too well, to suppose that they will hand themselves over to factious men as their directors, and I know the parliament too well to believe that it can be warped by the bugbear of inflammatory publications; I know that you will proceed with firmness and temper, and that you will deliver your thoughts with manly freedom, and without flattery or fear. Of what are you to be afraid? I have heard indeed a language within and without

these walls, and I have heard principles declared, in my opinion very desperate, very profligate and very dangerous, signed by those men who now come forward with a petition, which, though under a very modest guise, considering where it came from, I am inclined to suspect as a piece of the same principles. We are not at this day to be taught by political quacks, who tell us that radical reformatations are necessary in parliament. I have seen papers signed Tobias M'Kenna, with Simon Butler in the chair, and Napper Tandy lending his countenance. It was rather odd they could not contrive to set a better face on the matter; but, Sir, to use the language of an honourable member, behind me on a recent occasion [Lord Headford] "Such fellows are too despicable for notice, and therefore I shall not drag them from their obscurity."

I cannot help joining in the laugh at such ridiculous attempts to alarm your feelings, as if you could be swaggered out of your senses, or bobadilled out of your reason. You have the confidence of the people, and they are conscious of the blessings they enjoy. I tell the Roman Catholics, for many of whom I have the most sincere personal regard, that for their sakes as well as ours, we will preserve that constitution by which they have been, in common with others, protected and secured in the enjoyment of every thing that is dear to man. I will tell them that we ought not to suffer a rash and innovating spirit to disturb it: I will invite them to bend their prejudices to the state, but I will not suffer, if I can, the pride of the state to bend to their prejudices.

I will not, like other gentlemen, undertake the disagreeable task of occurring to irksome periods of our history, the bare recital of which would be *infandum renovare dolorem*; I will rather rejoice that persecutions have ceased on all hands, and I think men should now look rather to conciliate dissensions, than tear open a-fresh the long-healed wounds of civil strife. I am glad however the present question was introduced, and that every member of this House is called forward to declare his sentiments: for while the collision flashes new light upon our understandings, and removes unfounded prejudice, it gives us the opportunity of manifesting to our Protestant constituents, who is, or who is not worthy to sit here now, or to be sent here again as their representative.

I am not surprised that such conversations have brought to the recollection of the right honourable representative of a great northern county, the dreadful and eventful history of the last popish parliament in Ireland. Are gentlemen aware that King James's parliament, of the year 1689, not only repealed the act by which you all hold your titles to your estates, but that they proscribed 2400 of the Protestant nobility and gentry of Ireland, without the shadow of pretence? That they snatched

from the Protestant church its provision and support; that they robbed the august house of Ormond of that well-earned bounty which the crown had bestowed and the legislature confirmed; that under the pretence of extending the commerce of Ireland, they had by their act of navigation, not only disclaimed all connexion with the empire of Britain, and pride of her naval strength, but robbed her of the means of preserving it with the same spirit that would now flch a feather from the wing of the British eagle, at the moment that he is about to soar with victorious flight over the walls of Seringapatam? Are gentlemen aware that at the same period, the antient Protestant corporation of Dublin was overturned; that their charter was wrested from them, and their franchises bestowed on their opponents? Yes, the corporation of Dublin do know it; they know that it is time to speak out; they know that the constituent body have a right to be heard; they will know where to look for confidence and protection.

In the course of the debate much allusion has been made to an intended preamble for the Catholic bill, to express something that would enjoin the present and future parliaments from listening to future requisitions from the Catholic body. That, Sir, is a measure with which I cannot agree. We have no right to surrender our own deliberative faculties, and such a measure would shew us to be as irascible as we are impotent in the attempt. We should not poison or even embitter that cup, which when we offer in kindness, we should render as palatable as possible. It is blasphemous presumption to assume the attributes of prescience and omnipotence, by predestinating the future deliberations of ages that are to come, and to claim to ourselves foreknowledge absolute. We should act like honest and good centinels, and at the same time that we guard the portals of the constitution against the obtruding insolence with which innovation would force itself into the inmost recesses of this, her ancient temple, we will not say, that for ever we would shut the gates of mercy on mankind.

A day may come, and I hope will, when prejudices will be done away, and we can with kindness invite those who shall have manliness enough to lay them aside to participate our freedom; and I trust the progress which we are now making must give, not only to our countrymen, but to the world, the most evincing proofs, and the brightest hope, that the benign spirit of our constitution will;—Like a sweet oblivious antidote, cleanse the stuffed bosom of that perilous load that weighs upon the heart.

I shall now conclude by moving, “that the prayer of the petition of Edward Byrne and others, purporting to be on behalf of themselves and the Roman Catholics of Ireland, so far

as the same relates to a participation of the elective franchise, be not complied with now."

Mr. LATOUCHE replied, he would be glad first to hear the sentiments of gentlemen upon it.

Mr. BROWNLOW was sorry the intention of his right honourable friend seemed to be misunderstood; for, certainly, no disrespect to the petition was intended by his motion. He said the petition stood in a predicament similar to that of a bill, which after it is received and considered may be rejected if it be found to contain improper matter. This petition had been received with all deference, and had been ordered to lie on the table; for what end was this but that it might be perused by the members? And for what use was it perused but that its nature and tendency might be examined? His right honourable friend having attentively considered it, is of opinion that it ought to be rejected, and therefore made the motion. He hoped the House would not bind themselves for futurity, or resolve on any thing but the present rejection; for his part he had never bound himself to any particular line of parliamentary conduct, he was not so foolish as to think of binding his successors; he had no objection to the Solicitor General's motion, as he thought that since the sentiments of the House were now fully known on the subject, the manner in which they were conveyed was of no consequence.

Mr. MARCUS BERESFORD observed, there was another petition on the table, [the Belfast petition] which went much farther in its claims than the one now in debate; because it went to require a repeal of all the popery laws now in force. He wished the motion of his right honourable friend could be so worded, that the sense of the House might be declared upon both at once; he was perfectly indifferent as to the mode.

Sir THOMAS OSBORNE thought the prayer of the petition founded in justice and liberality, and that the time was now come, when we should begin to impart to our Roman Catholic brethren the rights of franchise.

The Hon. FRANCIS HUTCHINSON. Sir, I rise under the impression of much concern, deeply sensible of the importance of the question, and feeling that my opinion differs intirely, and radically, from a great majority of those to whom I address myself. But I think the time is now come, when every man ought to speak out; and I shall do so, regardless of any consequences, arising either from prejudice on the one hand, or popularity on the other.

I am sure the House will indulge me, while I state those reasons which govern my conduct on this night. However, before I enter into the question, I cannot avoid adverting to what has fallen from one of the principal law servants of the crown, [the Solicitor General] who has been pleased to say, that he was glad the matter of the Catholic petition has been agitated, because it was fitting that the Protestants of Ireland should know who are to be trusted, and who are not to be trusted.

I am one of those who cannot be prevented from taking my part, by the pressure of such an observation. I will declare my sentiments as freely as they have arisen in mind; and I trust they are such as, notwithstanding the invidious observation of the honourable gentleman, will not be deemed to render me unworthy of the confidence of any description of the people.

I shall not utter any opinion, in the most remote degree inconsistent with the security of the present establishments, either in the church or in the state; I venerate those establishments, and yield to no man in attachment to the constitution; whose vigour I would restore, and whose equal and just principles I seek to re-establish.

I am persuaded, that in opposing the present motion, and the grounds upon which it has been supported, I am acting for the maintenance of the dignity of parliament, for the advancement of the true interests of this country, and not against the sense of the nation at large.

When the honourable baronet first brought in this bill, a tight honourable gentleman [Mr. Ogle] rose in his place, and desired that the committal might be postponed to a late day. And he said, he made this proposition to the House on behalf of the Protestants of Ireland, that they might have time to consider of the measure, and to instruct their representatives. The idea of my right honourable friend was adopted. It was founded in wise precaution; and had too much national and parliamentary dignity, not to meet with universal approbation. The committal was deferred for nearly three weeks. That period was given for discussion. The sense of the nation was referred to; and the result has been a general acquiescence in favour of the bill.

The apprehensions which had been expressed within these walls, did not excite the public mind. The bulk of the people, who have been long witnesses of the peaceable demeanor, and tried allegiance of their Catholic brethren, could not be prevailed upon to raise their voices in opposition to the intended liberality of parliament.

They remembered the Catholic loyalty for this century past, in times of civil commotion, and national weakness, during

two rebellions, and while the succession to the crown was disputed by force of arms and hostile invasion.

They had themselves been witnesses of the situation of this country in the year 1779, that memorable æra, when the minister of the day informed this House, that we could derive no assistance from the sister kingdom.

When the pride of Great Britain was almost humbled in the dust; her armies led captive; one of the brightest jewels of the imperial crown torn from the diadem: at that moment, when the combined fleets of the two great Catholic powers of Europe threatened a descent upon our coasts, the people recollect from whom we derived our protection then. We found it in the support of three millions of our fellow citizens, in the spirit of our national character, and in the virtue of our Catholic brethren. We found them ready to sacrifice their fortunes and their lives in defence of that constitution, from the rights of which they had been long excluded, without any imputation of crime, in a period of profound peace, and in violation of the national faith.

We saw them forgetful of the oppressions which they had endured, and remembering only the public danger.

Shall we now say, that those very persons, by whose assistance we saved the state, and restored the constitution, deserve the reprehension of parliament? For such is the obvious tendency of the present motion, because they desire to be admitted under that state to the rights of citizens.

Whatever may be the tone of gentlemen within these walls, this is not the public feeling. The conduct of the Catholics in the hour of difficulty and danger, is not forgotten by the nation. And yet I have heard them on this night accused of sedition; and of an endeavour to disturb the Government. It is not difficult to utter the accusation. But I ask how this disposition appears? or why it is to be attributed to three millions of unoffending people, who are known to the state only by their loyalty and their sufferings? Shall they be considered as seditious, because they desire to be admitted to some of the privileges which we possess, and which their ancestors inherited; to rights which are part of the constitution, ascertained and guarded by the great charter, the fundamental law of the state? The charge is a national aspersion; it is answered by the history of your country, from the revolution to the present day, and by the uniform experience of every one of you.

I cannot help expressing much concern at the manner in which this debate has proceeded. The subject does not appear to me to have been fairly stated, or argued upon true constitutional principles. The object of the petition has been misrepresented, and motives charged to the petitioners, which they are known not to en-

tertain; imputations from which, a regard to the national character, which has been wounded through their sides, and the uniform tenor of their conduct for a century past ought to have protected them. In the place of calm investigation, we have heard little else but jealous accusations, and ill-placed doubts. Apprehensions with which it is difficult to reason, because there is nothing to combat, but a shadow, that vanishes as you approach it, and like the air-drawn dagger, eludes the grasp.

In speaking to this question, gentlemen do not seem sufficiently to consider the peculiar situation of this country, nor to have turned their minds to that necessity, which is urging on, and must produce a reform in the system of representation. I call upon you to reflect seriously within yourselves, whether the present system of exclusion ought to continue, or can be suffered to remain? Recollect that this is the only nation upon earth, in which the great body of the people are excluded, not only from all the civil establishments, but from those blessings which the Constitution confers.

The petitioners have approached this House with an humble and respectful application, desiring that persons of their persuasion may be restored to some share of the elective franchise. They claim a privilege attached by the constitution to freehold property. And because they have made this claim, they are charged with having thereby manifested a desire to become the ruling power; and are said to have demanded from the Protestants, a surrender into their hands of the government of the country.

Nothing contained in the petition can justify these charges. The misapprehension arises from not distinguishing between that franchise which the constitution has annexed to freeholds, and those powers which compose the machine of the state.

The former is that right to which every citizen, possessing a certain kind of property, ought to be admitted. The latter consists in the legislative, and the executive function; in that authority which makes the law, and enforces its execution. In the former, is to be found that vital principle, which gives animation and strength to the representative body, which so constituted, diffuses among the people the blessings of equal protection, and equal liberty.

It is for this privilege the Catholics have laid before you their humble petition. In which they contend, not for any speculative right, but for the representation of property; that foundation upon which the British constitution rests its weight.

The spirit of monopoly might have taken alarm, if they had sought to interfere with power in the hands of Protestants, with your exclusive rights, the proud dominion of your ascendancy in the government, with the honours or emoluments of the state; but those are not the objects which they seek: they only appeal

to your justice, to suffer them to return once more within the pale of the constitution.

They do not desire to become a part of the governing power.

To affix that meaning to their petition, is to confound what the petitioners have not confounded; the distinction between the constituent and the representative body.

I have heard them charged in the course of this debate, with an endeavour to force their way into the Houses of Parliament. But with what degree of justice this imputation is made, I leave to any reasonable mind to determine; when it is considered, that the only object of their petition is, that their property may be represented by Protestant representatives.

But this is not the question which now engages our attention. We are not debating whether the elective franchise shall be restored to the Catholics, but whether their petition shall be dismissed, by a vote of rejection? Whether the respectful and constitutional language of some of the principal commercial characters in the nation, who have addressed this House on behalf of themselves, and three millions of the people, shall be replied to with marked severity and unparliamentary disapprobation?

I have gone somewhat at large into the subject of this petition, for the purpose of shewing that it does not desire any thing, inconsistent with the constitution; nor breath any spirit, inimical to good government and sound policy. Confirmed as I am in this opinion, I do not see upon what ground the present motion can be maintained; and why the constant course of proceeding is now to be departed from. It is not usual for this House to answer petitions by specific resolutions: the forms of parliament are against it; and those forms are founded in wisdom, and confirmed by experience.

Gentlemen who argue for the rejection of this petition, cannot therefore attempt to justify their conduct on parliamentary precedent. Upon the necessity, of giving a negative to every petition, by its rejection, upon which, they are not prepared, to found any measure of relief. To such an argument every page of your journals, and the experience of every day, would furnish ample ground of contradiction.

This unusual and violent proceeding, can therefore only be vindicated on one or other of those grounds: either because the petitioners are undeserving from their own conduct; or because they have put forth requisitions unconstitutional, and trenching upon the settled government in church and state. It cannot be upon the first ground, because upon that the history of your country, and your own experience, furnishes a full and ready refutation. You know what the Catholics are, and what they have been in the most perilous times; and it cannot be justified on the latter, because what they have humbly desired, is but the restoration of their ancient franchise in part; which they enjoyed entire

many years after the revolution : which survived for a period of forty years, in its full and perfect state, this æra of Catholic humiliation ; and the pride, and the prejudice, and the jealousy of the Protestant legislator, in the hour of his triumph.

The advocates for the present motion have resorted to other topics in their defence. They were well aware, that according to the course of parliament, they could not stand justified in rejecting a petition—respectful in its manner, and constitutional in its import. And therefore, in order to furnish themselves with some colourable ground of argument, they have judged it necessary to misrepresent the object, and the conduct of the petitioners ; and then with a candor, well suited to this mode of proceeding, they have argued, from their own misrepresentations, in support of the motion.

They have complained that the petitioners have endeavoured to force their way into the state, and to push from their seats the Protestant legislators ; because they have preferred a petition desiring to be admitted to some participation in the election of Protestant representatives.

I have heard some of you, on this night, charge the Catholics with imputations, which you ought to have been ashamed to utter, and which, I trust, I shall never hear repeated within these walls.

If you had been satisfied with traducing the respectable individuals, who have subscribed to this petition, you would only have been guilty of private defamation ; but you have gone further ; you have imputed to your Catholic brethren, principles, of which you know, they are incapable ; and which are disavowed alike by the decency of their petition, and the loyalty of their conduct ; you have mistated their claims ; and you have branded your own misrepresentations with the name of sedition.

I charge you with having traduced the Catholic character ; you have defamed the nation by villifying the great body of its people ; but I do not say that you have been inconsistent ; you have not ill adapted your arguments to your cause. A proceeding of unjustifiable severity, disrespectful to the humble petitions of the people, and disgraceful to the dignity of parliament ; upheld by private slander, and public misrepresentation.

Sir HERCULES LANGRISHE stated the rights of petitioning, the orders of proceeding in parliament concerning the receiving petitions, and the various modes by which they were to be treated and decided on. He observed, that the present petition expressed itself in terms of respect, and contained nothing beyond the rights of the subject, or the rules of parliament ; that therefore it had been received, read, and ordered to lie on the table ; that the House had the power, according to their modes of proceeding, to

suffer it in silence to remain on the table, or to take it up and decide upon it according to their discretion; that as to the prayer of it, "for a share in the elective franchise," it did not become him to deliver an opinion; that when he engaged in the grateful office of submitting to parliament propositions in favour of his Catholic brethren, it was the wish of his heart, as well as the suggestion of his judgment, to carry them as far as he could, without alarming the jealousies, reviving the prejudices, or opposing the opinions of those who were to be his judges, but no further; and for this reason his wish was to promote accommodation, intercourse, and amity; that whatever we gave, we should if possible give unanimously; that whatever we gave, we should give with cordiality and good-will, with a confiding heart and an unrelenting hand; that it should appear the liberal testimony of a Protestant parliament, in favour of the approved perseverance of Catholic loyalty; that as it was his wish to serve them, he would prove his sincerity by the practicability of services, rather than the magnitude of demands; that he would rather consult his prudence than his passions; rather ensure by moderation, than hazard by enterprize; that he therefore solicited a communication on this subject with as many members of the legislature as he could without presumption, consult; that he found their opinions so decided against communicating this franchise at this time, that whatever might have been his private opinion, it would have been the height of imprudence in him to have introduced it into his bill, and the same motive prevents his adopting it now. He reprobated the House acting with disrespect to the petition, or traducing the petitioners; that what gentlemen had spoken of with some warmth was the misrepresentations of newspapers, which in his mind had no weight; if they were to believe newspapers, (which he did not) they would be inclined to think, that some even of those petitioners themselves had been persuaded to traduce some of their own profession, and those men of the highest rank in character, fortune, and information, that the kingdom can boast of; men who have long been the friends and benefactors of their country, and who were incapable of any crime, unless it be a crime to feel the pride of loyalty, and an ardent wish to vindicate their character from injurious principles that were attributed to them.

Mr. COOTE denied that the petition was treated with disrespect; it was very immaterial how it was rejected, so it was not agreed to. He expressed his hope that the Roman Catholics would never be admitted to the elective franchise, nor to the full blessings of the constitution. He never could consent to a measure of blending power with toleration, and toleration with power. He would never consent that power should depart from the Protestant ascendancy; and that ascendancy, and that power, he should ever support.

The Hon. DENIS BROWNE, in answer to what had fallen from the Solicitor General relative to arguments bloated with French

and American revolutions, defended his own arguments on that head. He had heard gentlemen assert with bitterness, the petition should be rejected; but he had not heard a single reason why. He had been long in the habit of conversing with Roman Catholics; many of them were his particular and much esteemed friends. He was proud in avowing himself their advocate; and he was sure that there was nothing done in that House with respect to them, which could in the least interrupt the peace of the country.

Mr. TRENCH thought the question one of the most important ever agitated. He was for the rejection of the enfranchisement at present, though he was certain there were not more loyal subjects on earth than the Catholics of Ireland; but he thought the Protestants of the country would not be strong enough for them, armed with such a power.

Colonel BLAQUIERE was surprized that any honourable member should bring forward such a petition. Passing of such bills would in time dethrone the king, and subvert the Protestant succession. Every member who recollects the revolution of 1688, and the whole reign of James II. must see if this petition was granted, the kingdom would revert to the same state it was before that revolution. If such measures as these were frequently passed in that assembly, the pillars of the House must bend, its foundation shake, and the whole fabric totter on the brink of destruction. Sir, said he, I shall ever revere while I have breath, the constitution as settled by our glorious deliverer William III. and if my tongue had lost its faculties, and my limbs stretched motionless, and my whole frame sinking to dissolution, I should, I think, still struggle for this principle.

Mr. PERY entertained but few fears himself, as to any danger from the Catholic pretensions; but as many respectable men did fear them, they deserve consideration. The example of Europe in this eventful day, might teach the House the danger of innovating with rash hand their political polity. The enlightened liberality of the times, which by most men was urged as a reason for tearing up by the roots old establishments, was with him the strongest reason in the world for guarding against change; for what was this liberality? A wild democratic spirit which had gone abroad among the nations aiming at an universal equality among mankind. In this country there had sprung up some zealous apostles, the object of whose lives was to make proselytes to this doctrine, and they had found proselytes among the young and intemperate. It was not in the hope of giving ease or security to any sect of religionists that these men had engaged in their mission; it was with a design of promoting discord and confusion in the country, in order to attain a degree of celebrity which neither their situation in life, their ta-

lents, or their characters could ever, under any settled government, obtain for them. He alluded not to any member of that House; they had a theatre for the display of ability, and were not reduced to those wretched shifts for fame. He then alluded to the bill now in its course through the House, and said it gave to the Catholics every thing necessary to their happiness, and was not at all dangerous to the Protestant interest.

Mr. M. SMITH. I shall certainly vote against the rejection of this petition, but will not, at the same time pledge myself to support its prayer, if that prayer shall come to be coolly and dispassionately canvassed; for though I look to the utter extinction of the penal code, as to the consummation of this country's prosperity, yet I would not be understood to say, or to have said, that I thought the fulness of time was now come, when such a measure should take place. As to the question before the House, I confess I thought it had been precluded by our resolution of Saturday last, to receive the petition; for a resolution to receive, and a resolution not to reject, seemed to my humble understanding to be synonymous; but as some very respectable gentlemen entertain a different opinion, I am willing to surrender my sentiment upon the subject and to adopt theirs. It has been said that a rejection of this petition will be in no wise disrespectful to those in whose behalf it has been presented; but, Sir, I hold that such a measure will be not only highly disrespectful to those persons, but derogatory in a very great degree from the dignity of this House, and therefore I will oppose it to the utmost of my ability. Our country is divided into two great communities—the Protestants and the Roman Catholics. Their relative numbers I do not accurately know; nor, if I did know, would I be fond of stating; but the former is the ascendant, the latter the depressed party in the state. Thus circumstanced, the latter in the humble garb and in the language of supplication, approach their ascendant fellow citizens, and pray to be admitted to such a participation of a great constitutional privilege, as the wisdom and justice of those applied to may suggest: And is this the petition, Sir, that ought to receive no answer? Is this a petition that we should not deign even to consider? Is it a petition that ought to be rejected, not only without debate, but with disdain? Believe me, Sir, if ever there was a time when this House was called upon to act with calmness as well as firmness, with moderation as well as magnanimity, it is the present occasion. We are, as the ascendant body in the state, now solemnly called upon to sit in judgment upon the supplication, and to decide upon the important claim of our Roman Catholic fellow citizens:—and shall we either decline the decision altogether, or enter upon it with heat, with passion, or with prejudice? Is there any other power upon earth to which the petitioners could apply? Is it unreasonable or unnatural that they should solicit what they seek? And shall we not, on this awful oc-

casion, while we sit as judges upon the momentous claims and supplications of our fellow subjects, hear, with patience hear, and consider what may be urged in their behalf? Shall we abjure our own dignity, and insult their feelings by dismissing them from our bar unheeded and unheard? Sir, I wish the House to act with more kindness to them, and with more respect to itself. Let us at least consider their prayer; and if, on due deliberation, we shall deem a compliance with it inexpedient, let our refusal be signified with kindness, not with contempt; with dignity, but not with disdain. Let our decision be firm, but not insulting; and let it be such as while it secures us, may for the present at least satisfy them. Sir, gentlemen have said, that a compliance with the prayer of this petition may not, for the present, be expedient; but I deny, utterly and absolutely deny, that it would be unconstitutional. Whence are we to date our constitution? Where shall we find the great foundation of it? Is it not in the revolution of 1688? Then it was that our constitution was fixed; then were all its palladia defined and ensured; every thing deemed noxious to its vital principle was then removed, and nothing but what was held salutary was suffered to remain. From thence, therefore, we are to date the sanity, and the purity of our constitution; and yet from thence down to the reign of George II. a period of little less than forty years, Roman Catholics were suffered to enjoy that franchise fully and entirely; the smallest portion of which, it is now said cannot be imparted to them without a surrender of the constitution. Was then our constitution surrendered at the revolution of 1688? Was it surrendered into the hands of Roman Catholics during the reigns of William III. and of Anne, when the penal code became the law of the land? Or was the accession of the Brunswick family marked by a surrender of the constitution of our country? If to communicate any share of the elective franchise to Roman Catholics would be to betray our constitution, then does it follow, of necessity, that during the whole of the period which I have mentioned, our constitution stood betrayed or unasserted. But it may be asked, where lies the difference between this measure's being inexpedient or unconstitutional? Sir, the difference is great indeed, and in my opinion, obvious; its being inexpedient is a reason against our imparting it now; but its being unconstitutional would be a justification for withholding it for ever. Hence it is, Sir, that I combat the unwarranted and the impolitic position that is laid down. I deprecate the perpetual exclusion of our Roman Catholic brethren from an equal share of all our civil rights and a free participation of the blessings of our constitution.

I know that such an exclusion is not within our power; but I must resist a doctrine which, if it were to have any effect, could only serve to mislead posterity or to dishonour ourselves.

Those being my sentiments, Sir, I shall give my negative to the depending motion.

Mr. GRAYDON said, that neither in the former debate of Saturday, nor hitherto, in this, had he obtruded on the House any opinion respecting this great constitutional question, as he wished to hear, from great and respectable authorities on both sides of it, those sentiments and declarations, which the occasion would properly call forth, and which would assist them in either forming or connecting their judgment. Several gentlemen having, however, called upon members to speak freely and decidedly their opinions, and one gentleman, having expressed himself, as conveying an intimation to the House, that all those, who voted against the rejection of the petition, voted, in reality, for communicating to the Roman Catholics a right of suffrage; he thought it necessary to rise and declare, in a few words, the best determination he could form on this subject.

He would premise what he had to say, by expressing his concern that he found himself obliged to differ on this question with the right honourable mover of it, a man whose many and conspicuous public and private virtues had justly raised him to the rank of one of the first citizens of the state, but he could not argue with him, as to the prudence and expediency of treating the petition in the manner he had proposed. He would not hesitate to declare, in the most explicit terms, that in his judgment, the right of suffrage should not be, at this time, communicated to the Roman Catholics, because he was decidedly of opinion that such a communication, in the present state of this country and temper of the times would either endanger the Protestant ascendancy, as it had been called, or prove destructive to the Roman Catholics themselves. That body is not now prepared to receive or to exercise it with benefit to the country; but at the same time, it would be unwise as wholly ineffectual, to say or to do any thing which might seem to preclude them from participating in that right hereafter. Any man, who considered the present state of this country, would clearly see that, if the principles of our constitution shall remain as they are at this day, the Roman Catholics must be admitted, in time, to what they at present solicit, rather prematurely. The legislature has already opened to them the way to the acquisition of property, by all possible means, and four-fifths of the people of any country, pursuing that object through the road of industry, must obtain a proportionable share in the possession of the soil. Will any man say, that four-fifths of the possessors of freeholds, or equivalents to freeholds, shall remain without representation in this country? The idea is too absurd to be admitted for a moment. There cannot therefore remain a doubt that, in the common and ordinary progress of the acquisition of property, the Roman Catholics of this kingdom will become entitled to a large portion of legislative power in it. What then is the policy that wisdom would suggest to be pursued? To prepare their minds and fashion their political manners for the exercise of that power, when the day shall arrive that shall bring

with it a necessity of communicating it to them. We should do every thing, that may tend to associate them to their Protestant brethren and assimilate their habits, their manners, and political opinions with ours : At the present time, such a communication of power would tend to the very reverse ; it would set up distracted councils and divided interests, and introduce, between the two bodies, a struggle for ascendancy, before the Roman Catholic was prepared by intermixing with Protestants, or sufficiently established in the landed interest of the country to feel that the true political objects of both were one and the same.

Thus a breach between the two, instead of a union, would be promoted, and it must terminate either in the overthrow of the present ruling power, or the destruction of the Roman Catholic growing one. The bill now before the House, will no doubt contribute much to further the principle of associating the two bodies, but the motion now made, so far as it goes, directly tends to the infringement of it ; this must appear from considering the ordinary method of proceeding, in cases of a similar nature. When ever a bill is introduced, all classes of people have a right to petition Parliament upon the subject of it. The petitioners are almost universally received ; there is hardly an instance of rejection. If the member, who introduces the petition, thinks it a proper subject of adoption, he takes it up, whilst the bill is depending, and moves that the committee, on the bill, may be empowered to receive a clause or clauses, pursuant to the prayer of the petition ; any other member may do the same ; the object of the petition is then fairly before the House, and we are called upon to decide whether it be such a one as is admissible or not ; but, as in the present instance, where such a step is not taken, the petition remains silently upon the table ; no farther notice is had of it ; the bill goes through the committee, and the act, when it passes, is the proper and dignified answer of the House to the prayer of the petition. Then why depart, in this case, from this grave, customary form ? and why mark a petition, from so respectable a body of our fellow-subjects, with peculiar reprobation ? Such a departure from the common process will convey an appearance of intemperance and aversion ; and, upon such an occasion, appearances, should be regarded as highly important, and we should carefully guard against even misrepresentation out of doors. Every thing conciliatory, nothing irritating, should accompany the progress of the bill ; all harsh manner of conducting it should be avoided ; as contradictory to the avowed and apparent principle on which it is founded. Besides, let us consider whether it will operate in effect against the intention of those who are most zealous for rejecting the petition, and who ground their treatment of it upon a desire to cut off the expectations of the Roman Catholics. It is certain this question will not pass without a division. It is almost as certain, that the bill, now before the House, will pass unanimously. How will this transaction then appear upon the votes ? that the

House with one voice agreed to relax the laws that bear hard upon the Roman Catholics of this country, and that there were even some who did not think it proper to reject a petition of theirs, which claimed the right of suffrage.

It therefore appeared to him extremely unwise to step aside from the usual mode of proceeding in this instance, tending to widen, instead of closing, the difference between Protestants and Roman Catholics, and probably introducing consequences very detrimental to the common interest of both, without a possibility of producing any benefit to either. He would, therefore, vote against rejecting the petition in this manner.

Mr. CURRAN was convinced of the rectitude of intention on the part of the right honourable mover of this question; but he feared the mode of rejection as abrupt, and its consequences as serious. What the petitioners asked, was merely such share in the constitution and elective franchise, as the House should think it wise to grant, and would it be decent to give an unqualified rejection to their request? He, for his own part, had no Roman Catholic connexions, and he trusted he had credit enough in that house to guard him from the suspicion of being disposed to gratify a wild spirit of innovation subversive of the constitution. But he thought when one part of the community were appealed to as judges in their own cause, their discussion should not be attended with a shout of victory; they should decide with coolness and moderation; for he should rather imitate the judge who dismisses with a sigh, than the victor who bears down his adversary, without deigning to examine his supplication. He was of opinion it was better the present motion should be withdrawn as unnecessary: the petition had been received and ordered to lie on the table: he therefore conceived the petition already disposed of, without any farther proceeding; for surely the House was not so low in public respect as that nothing was to be understood from its silence. This mode of conveying its determination to the petitioners would he thought, be the most proper and conciliating; it would tell the Catholics "We feel you are not represented, we feel our own superiority, but we do not meanly exult in your depression; and we wish for the day when you may be found fully qualified for equality, though we do not clearly see it now." This would in his idea be better, than an abrupt and irritating rejection; for if he were a friend to the wildest schemes of ambition attributed to the Catholics, he would recommend the rejection of the present petition, as such a measure could tend only to stimulate ambition to precipitancy, and excite passion and discontent where the contrary feelings were desirable. There was a point of Catholic liberality and Protestant justice which must unite to form the bonds of Catholic emancipation, and on the present occasion he would adopt the dignified conduct of executive government, which does not proudly reject the measures of the two other branches of the le-

gislature, but signifies its disapprobation by simply withholding its assent.

Mr. HARDY said, that in the course of his parliamentary existence, few things, indeed nothing almost, had given him so much concern as the debate which had taken place on this petition, and the mode in which it had been conducted. That the motion was well intended he could entertain no doubt, but that it could attain the objects it aimed at, he entertained but little expectation. His honourable and learned friend [Mr. Curran] had appealed to the good sense and moderation of the House, in language so eloquent, and so conciliatory, as left him scarcely any thing to say on that head, and the learned gentleman behind him [Mr. Smith] had spoke with so much legal and historical knowledge, and such perspicuity on the subject, as was unanswerable. Other gentlemen had spoken in the course of the night, to whom he thought it necessary to make some reply to. A right honourable gentleman [Mr. B. Conyngham] had said, he wished to hear the opinions of gentlemen, and that the House should speak out on the subject. He agreed with the right honourable gentleman; he wished so too. But how speak out? Would the determination of the House, as to the elective franchise, whatever that determination might be, be accompanied with less dignity, or less acquiesced in, if the question was brought before them in a separate and regular form, than now, where it was so unexpectedly brought forward, and the House of Commons obliged to travel out of its way to give an opinion as to the elective franchise, which no member of the House had called upon it to declare. The prayer of the petition went indeed to the franchise, and as it was evident to every man, that such a requisition would not now be complied with, the House, in his opinion, took the wisest and safest mode of disposing of that petition, by suffering it to lie quietly on the table, and no proceedings to be had upon it. If this was the usual mode, he would ask why depart from that mode now, when not only the silence of gentlemen within doors upon the subject, but every circumstance of the times, and the peculiar situation of the petitioners, seemed to demand a prudent adherence to it. Had any extraordinary event taken place since Saturday, when the petition had been brought in, read with great form, and unanimously received, as that the minds of gentlemen should depart from their remarkable moderation and good humour of that day? He had heard of none, and whatever vote the House might come to that night, it was evident that gentlemen, many at least, thought with him on the subject, from the approbation with which they seemed to receive an honourable and learned gentleman's [the Solicitor General] amendment over the way. The honourable gentleman's motion was unquestionably much better than the original one, though not perhaps exactly agreeable to parliamentary usage. As to the mode which he took to recommend it, he [Mr. Hardy]

did not think it either congenial to the learned gentleman's acknowledged philanthropy and good humour, or at all adapted to the spirit of the motion itself. The learned gentleman set out with a very prudent and benign declaration that he would not tread in the steps of other gentlemen who had dwelt so much on former divisions and hostilities in this country. It was an invidious and ungrateful subject; he would have nothing to do with it. And how does the learned gentleman adhere to his declaration? By not only touching on the subject, but going into a detailed and very circumstantial history of the proceedings of James the Second's parliament in Ireland, which, says he, attainted your ancestors, confiscated the estates of the amiable and illustrious Duke of Ormond, and was guilty of all atrocious acts imaginable. Such was the learned gentleman's prefatory speech to a most pacific amendment. He said, he deprecated all such appeals to the passions, instead of the understanding. If ever there was a time when moderation was peculiarly necessary, it was at present, firmness was equally so; the one did not exclude the other; proper firmness and true moderation were in fact the same. The House was called upon to decide on one of the most important political questions that could be imagined, not calmly, nor regularly, but in a sort of sudden tumultuous manner, perfectly inconsistent with the slow, temperate, deliberate attention which they had hitherto bestowed on the subject. Was every minute and subordinate clause of the bill to undergo the most anxious revision, and the most important circumstance in its whole history to be instantly decided on? Or could he, who had expressly stated on Saturday night, that if the bill contained any clause which mentioned the elective franchise, it should be postponed till next session, merely on account of the magnitude of such a question, now reject, in an instant, a petition, already entertained, because it touched on that subject. Was there not too much heat and violence in all this, and were these the proper qualities to enter into conferences with such a number of our fellow subjects? The exordium of Cæsar's speech on the Cataline conspiracy, and the excellent advice which it contained, might, he thought, be justly given on this occasion, "*Omnes homines, qui de rebus dubiis consultant, ab odio, inimicitia, ira, vacuos esse decet.*" A right honourable gentleman had said, "Let the Roman Catholics abandon their prejudices, and we shall abandon ours." And certainly whilst such prejudices existed on both sides, it was not possible for the parties to come to a final amicable settlement. The question, therefore, with regard to the elective franchise, was at present, in fact, though silently, disposed of, and why then resort to this abrupt unnecessary rejection of the petition? As to the elective franchise, he saw no substantial reason against a Roman Catholic gentleman of property and respectability being intrusted with it; this he spoke of now, abstractedly,

for he scarcely expected (if he could judge from the complexion of the presens times) to see any such event taking place; however, he trusted in God, his child might live to see it; when, by a gradual incorporation of all fellow subjects, of whatever religious denominations, the grosser errors and doctrines of Popery would be comparatively lost in the superior purity of the Protestant religion, and both parties attend to the great characteristic and precept of their common Christian faith—"Peace and good will to wards men."

An honourable gentleman [Mr. Pery] had spoken in an animated manner of the promulgation of some extraordinary political tenets, which he considered as inimical to all sound and sober government. Mr. Hardy said, he partly agreed with him, but it must be a weak constitution indeed, which could not resist such attacks. As to the discussion of political questions, he always approved of for this reason, that truth was ultimately benefited by it. If men wrote servilely or absurdly, still they generally met with those who would answer them; and thus even their imbecility was made to contribute to the growth and to the extent of human reason.

Sir Robert Filmer was answered by Mr. Locke, and thus his nonsensical ideas, as to government, were eventually the means of justifying the revolution. It was therefore wise in every free government to leave such publications to their own fate; if they contained any good in them, they would necessarily so far benefit mankind; if they did not, what could preserve them from oblivion, except the folly of noticing them? As to the petition, he again repeated, he did not think himself justified in rejecting it, though, as to the object of it, (the elective franchise) he was equally decided that it could not immediately be granted. In the present situation of the country it would be just the most impolitic step that any statesman could take. For, what was the duty of a statesman before he offered any great and original measure to the public? To consider what he must immediately hazard, and what he may eventually gain. In this case the tranquillity of the country would be instantly shaken to pieces, and on the other hand would be put in the balance, a privilege very imperfectly exercised, and under such restrictions as would not, in all probability, gratify the party to whom it was restored. Not that he doubted that granting it in the manner proposed by some of the Roman Catholic community, would meet the wishes of the moderate amongst them. He believed it would. But would it, fettered as it necessarily must be on its onset, gratify the more sanguine and violent, who, in times, heated like the present, and who generally, indeed always, leave the moderate, far, far behind them? If he could judge from some publications it would not. Some gentlemen in the course of the debate, had advanced a most extraordinary position indeed—They said, "That in no possible

situation of the country could the elective franchise be given to the Roman Catholics with any safety to the state." Without animadverting on the extreme facility with which gentlemen undertook to dispose of futurity in this manner, and to prescribe to other times, and other parliaments, who without any violent effort of imagination might be presumed to view this question in a very different light from that in which it was then regarded; without dwelling on the happy tranquillity of mind with which gentlemen could view the revolutions that were then going on in the world, and which might possibly touch this country in their progress, as well as others; waving all this, he should briefly observe that the Roman Catholic laws were not founded, like the Magna Charta, or the petition of right, on great principles of truth which must remain the same in all times, and all vicissitudes whatever. No—They were founded on policy merely, a policy which other times made it necessary to resort to certainly, but as the times altered and passed away, the policy should be altered and pass away also. Gentlemen therefore, who insisted so much on the immutability of some particular Roman Catholic laws, were singularly unfortunate in selecting them as the objects of perpetual, unchanging regard; for, of all laws whatever, such laws, from the very nature of them, must be peculiarly and necessarily most subject to change. He had spoken of the quiet of the country, and so convinced was he of the necessity, the absolute necessity of maintaining it, at all events, that there was nothing independent of the constitution which he would not sacrifice to preserve it. In this he was sure he spoke like a friend to the people, who under the shade of that tranquillity, would gradually obtain their just consequence in the state, and so be enabled to oppose all its enemies, internal or otherwise; and he doubted not but the day would yet come, when the gentlemen of that House would be enabled to call in aid of their constitutional exertions, a yeomanry very different from the present, a yeomanry of decent knowledge, of comfortable circumstances, and alive to the feelings of freemen, and who would then exercise, with credit to themselves and advantage to their country, that elective franchise, which, if then thrown into their hands, wildly and indiscreetly, as some theorists suggested, would only prove an instrument in the hands of every ambitious, opulent neighbour, for the aggrandisement of that neighbour, and their own repeated humiliation. He concluded with declaring, that he was sorry the question had been brought forward, but as it was, he must give it his negative.

Mr. HOLMES thought it would be impolitic to communicate the elective franchise to the Roman Catholics until we had first given them education; this was a mean object of the bill before the House, and when we see its operation, it would be time enough to go farther.

The Right Hon. W. B. PONSONBY. I rise to support the resolution of the right honourable gentleman [Mr. Latouche]. We cannot suffer this petition to go to a committee; if we did, we should seem to approve its principles; but as we disapprove it, I would tell them boldly that we will not grant their claim.

Right Hon. Mr. HOBART. I rise with great satisfaction to concur precisely with my right honourable friend. I never felt more pleasure in my life than in concurring with him. I wish the petition had never been presented; it was done, I believe, rather with a view to defeat the bill, than to forward it, for it was well known the House could not concur.

As to the Roman Catholics, I think it the very reverse of disrespect not to give an answer to their petition: I would not treat any body of men with disrespect; I have an anxious wish for the happiness of the people of this kingdom of all descriptions, the Roman Catholics as well as others; but regarding as I do the Protestant constitution, I cannot concur in the petition, nor have I any fear in rejecting it.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL supported the motion on the general principles adduced by other members in the course of the debate. He contended that Roman Catholics under a privation of franchise, were not worse situated than above two-thirds of the Protestants of this country; and he concluded by saying, he hoped the day would come, when the Catholics and Protestants of this country would be but one people, united for the strength and happiness of the empire.

Colonel HUTCHINSON. I should not think of rising at this late hour of the night, were it not absolutely necessary from the part I took in a former debate. I would rather incur the guilt of presumption, by pressing myself on the wearied attention of this House, than have it supposed, for a moment, that I had abandoned the ground on which I once stood.

During the course of this debate I have heard very extraordinary language from an honourable member, for whom I have long entertained great personal regard and respect, language on which I shall not comment, because I hope never again to hear it repeated within these walls; but this much I must say, that the gentlemen who signed that petition are persons of property, respectability and character; Mr. Byrne alone pays 100,000*l.* a year duty to his majesty's revenue; the capital, which such a trade requires, must be large indeed, and gives some security for the peaceable and loyal conduct of him who possesses it. If there is a man in the world engaged from interested motives to preserve the tranquillity of a country, it is a merchant, who possesses a large floating property, which may vanish on the appearance of civil con-

vulsion, or be entirely annihilated by the events of external warfare. This canvas of the personal merits and demerits of petitioners to this House is new parliamentary doctrine, and which ought not to be endured; we are the servants of the people, and not their masters. They have a right to petition us, provided they do it in a decorous and respectful manner; and there is no man who contends that this is not a decorous and respectful petition—Who will venture to appear before you, if he shall be obliged to endure this fiery ordeal, and to submit to such treatment? Believe me it is a wretched employment for the parliament of Ireland to pass, day after day, and night after night, in libelling the great majority of the Irish nation.

Much applause has been given to the present bill, now before us; I am willing to give it some—I like its principle; it is the principle of concession to the Catholic body, which I admire and applaud—yet how far does it go? What does this boasted bill give? What restraints will remain after it has passed into a law? No Catholic, however brave his spirit, or consummate his military talents, can command a company of foot in your service, nor, had he the enterprising genius of Cooke, or Columbus, could he command the smallest sloop in your fleet. If half of a country were his own estate, he could not preserve its peace by acting as a magistrate, or take care of his property by performing the duties of a grand juror: Such are some of the restraints under which the happy, fortunate, and favoured Catholic will still continue to labour.

It is said, that they retain prejudices adverse to the constitution. What is meant by this assertion I have not sagacity sufficient to discover. It cannot surely be maintained, that there is any thing in their religion which makes them the natural enemies of a free and admirable form of government. In order to do away this aspersions, it will be unnecessary for me to have recourse to the writings of the French philosophers, to the eloquence of the French orators, to the actions of the French nation. The conduct of the Irish Catholics themselves is a sufficient answer to this unfounded insinuation. Did you not at a late period, when every thing that could be dear and honourable to you as a nation was at stake, find them in arms by your side, in order to protect that liberty, which they are not suffered to enjoy, and to regenerate that constitution, into whose pale they were not allowed to enter? In times of dread, and danger, they were your associates, your soldiers, your defenders; now in a moment of tranquillity, when you think you have no occasion for their services, you reject and calumniate them. You called upon them in 1779 to assist you in recovering your commerce, in re-establishing your constitution, in defending your country against a foreign invasion; your call was a proof of your weakness, and of your fears; their obedience was a proof of their affection, and of their strength.

Did they seize on a dangerous and critical moment, in order to embarrass your affairs? Did they then remember the oppression or misery of ages? They saw in the establishment of Protestant liberty, if not their own emancipation, at least the pride, and the glory of the country which had given them birth.

It is nonsense, I am sure, to talk to you of gratitude, but I would address one word to your own understanding.

If the revolution of 1782 could not have been brought about but by the co-operation of the Catholic body, can there be any prosperity, any power, any real strength in Ireland, unless the Protestants condescend to coalesce with them, and all descriptions of men shall be knit together in the bonds of common union and common affection.

Gentlemen have talked of Papists, and of drawing swords; I almost hoped not to have heard such language used at this day; I answer it by saying, that the great body of Catholics in this kingdom by no means deserve that severe appellation; I believe the number of Papists to be few; they would be much fewer, if those of the established church were willing to think, and to speak of them with more liberality, and less misrepresentation. Fortunately for this country Catholic bigotry have not kept pace with Protestant prejudice; what is meant by drawing of swords I cannot tell of this, I am convinced, and I call upon any man to deny it if he can, that his majesty does not possess a more peaceable, and more loyal body of subjects, than the Catholics of Ireland. To prove this, my assertion would be unnecessary, I appeal to their conduct, to their tried conduct for a century; I defy malignity itself to impute any designs to them, which are hostile to the state, the church, or the king.

Let me now revert to your conduct on this night.

The Catholics have presumed to state to you, (who, if not their representatives, are undoubtedly their legislators and governors) and to this their native country, the oppressions, and grievances, under which they labour; for such their conduct, you traduce their motives, you malign their characters, you talk of fears, which you do not feel, and of dangers which you do not apprehend, and are willing to seize on this or that unauthorized expression, of this or that unauthorized individual, in order to justify you in proscribing the whole Catholic body, and dismissing from your bar, with outrage and indignation, the petition of three millions of your people. Are these the wise principles of the Protestant ascendancy? Are these the firm foundations of liberty, of truth, and security, on which it is built? Go one step farther; condemn them to hug their chains, order them not to feel as men, command them not to use their recollection, or their eye-sight; and not to remember the events of their own history, or that which has passed in their own times in America, and is now passing in France and in Poland.

Something has been said of wild and innovating systems of reformation, and of factions existing in this country. For myself I will say, that I am no innovator, I belong to no faction.

[Here the Solicitor General rose to explain, that he did not any way allude to the honourable member, but to that blasted society called United Irishmen. He was sorry he had sat down without calling those fellows to the bar, but he now pledged himself to the House that he would do it.]

Sir, resumed Colonel Hutchinson, I speak no language but my own. If any man in this country has infringed the laws, the laws are equal to punish him. It is peculiarly the duty of gentlemen in office to see them enforced; I acknowledge with satisfaction, and with pride that I have talked of the reformation of your penal code; I shall continue to talk this language to you as long as I continue to exist; for in that reformation alone I see the future prosperity of my country, and that prosperity I value more than life—equal to honour.

Mr. GRATTAN. I find myself under difficulty to express how much I regard the mover, and condemn the motion. It is a measure as strong and as violent as any ever perhaps propounded in parliament. You are to reject a petition, which you have received already, decorous in its manner, regular in its introduction and respectable from its signatures. You reject it, because it comes from a great body of Roman Catholics, and applies, on behalf of that body, for some small share of freedom. Thus you are not only to refuse, but extinguish the principle; you are not only to disappoint, but insult the petitioner. You put the rejection on grounds which, you know are fictitious. You say this House must answer the petition. Then I am to understand, every petition with which you do not comply, you are to reject by way of answer. There is a petition now before you touching the improvement of the brewery, which you have not rejected nor complied with; the petitions last year against the police, of all the corporations of Dublin, Did you reject them? Did you comply with them?

But there is another petition on our table; a petition from the capital of Ulster; a petition from the most rising, spirited, and commercial town in the kingdom, Belfast, that goes infinitely farther than the Roman Catholic, in their prayer for indulgences. This petition, on a division, you received. The humble petition of the Catholics you reject; or is it proposed, in order to preserve consistency, to reject the Belfast petition as well as the Catholic, and thus commit a violence on the Protestant as well as the Catholic subject; on the first for desiring freedom for his fellow-citizen, and on the last for desiring it for himself?

The English parliament in its inveteracy towards the Americans, did not go this length. They did not reject the petitions of the Americans. There were some members who did, indeed, talk as you have done, with respect to the persons of the Americans. They derided Hancock and his crew, or Adams and his crew, as some here have derided Mr. Byrne and his associates. I was concerned and ashamed to hear certain observations on the names and conditions of the petitioners, and more concerned to find such observations received and echoed by the other side of the House, with applause and triumph. The first name to that petition, is one of the first merchants in Ireland; his credit would go farther than the character of most of our modern courtier placemen: the others, who have been outraged, are men of property, respectability, of honest and useful application to extend your trade, for the exercise of which they are now the subject of your derision. What Catholic in this country will ever be a merchant? or what merchant a petitioner, if he is to undergo this fiery ordeal, and to be the subject of scorn in the Commons, because he has been an instrument and promoter of commerce? It is not so in England. I do not hear that the great merchants there are lightly treated or outraged by the ministerial part of the House of Commons in England: that Mr. Thornton and Mr. Long have been a subject of disrespect. I do not remember to have read that Alderman Beckford or Sir John Barnard met with any such treatment; and yet it is much more improper in the case of merchants subscribing the petition, because they are not present nor represented, and therefore are not protected, and in a peculiar manner intitled to your liberality. A right honourable member (high in confidence) from whose quarter of the House this intemperate disrespect and noise proceeded, has informed you that the petition was conceived with a view to defeat the bill. Sir, the right honourable member is wholly unfounded in the charge, and he ought to be particularly cautious to avoid reflections on the people of this country. It is not the province of a Lord Lieutenant's Secretary to make animadversions, prejudicial to the reputation even of the Roman Catholics of this country. They too are subjects to be defended against insinuations, as well as injuries and outrage. I therefore feel myself under the necessity of observing on the right honourable member, so far as to say, that his charge was highly improper and entirely unfounded; and I must further add, that whenever any assault is made on the character of the commercial part of this country by a cry even in this House, I will not be wanting to rebuke such levity.

The matter of the petition has been much misrepresented as well as the character of the petitioners. It has been stated that it is an application to establish a Catholic parliament. Sir, it is an application to be permitted to vote at elections, and not to sit in parliament; and it is an application for such a share of that

elective franchise as shall bear no proportion to yours, and therefore it is an application for some share of the blessings of the constitution, under the Protestant ascendancy, not in opposition to it. Calculate, condescend to reckon what would be the number of the Protestant and Catholic voters, if that share in the proportion desired was granted, and you will find the result to be the opposite to your conclusion; you will find that the proportion of suffrage is out of all comparison greater than the Catholic; that is, you will find Protestant ascendancy preserved, and Catholic freedom permitted; or, in other words you will find their liberty is your strength, and you will find, you are not afraid of losing your constitutional power, but of adding to it; that your panic does not suffer your understanding to perceive your own weakness, or provide for your own strength; just as your property in land is better secured by their share of property in land, so your property in the constitution is better secured by their share of property in the constitution. This very principle, which is the principle of their petition, is the preamble of your own law: Whereas it must tend to the prosperity of this kingdom to admit subjects of every denomination; into what? A share in the blessings of our free constitution. In fine, does it not depend upon you what share they shall have, and may not you secure your own proportion of power, and their proportion of freedom; but it is said, if they have any share, however small, in the constitution, they will get at last the ascendancy? What proof is there offered of this? what proof attempted? None—Mere assertion, the assertion of panic; and if it has any meaning at all except panic and weakness, it means, that if you give the Catholics share in the blessings of your constitution, they will, by that intermixture, assimilate to you; that is, they will be in politics Protestant, and then you yourselves may perhaps be inclined to go further.

It is not always possible to refute objections by example as well as reason, but the objection now under consideration is refuted by both. The experiment has been made, whether giving the elective franchise is tantamount to giving them seats in parliament; they had that elective right near half a century after the revolution; they had it in the parliament that sat in the reign of King William; they had it in the parliament that sat in the reign of Anne; they had it in the parliament that sat in the reign of George the First, and they had it in the parliament that sat in the reign of George the Second. The first parliament that sat in Ireland since the Revolution in which the Roman Catholics had not the elective franchise, was the first of the present reign: it follows from this example, that the elective franchise, so far from securing to them the right of sitting in parliament, was not able to secure the right of voting at elections; they lost that right in the commencement of George the Second's reign, after having possessed it for thirty-seventy years since the Revolution; from

hence I conclude, that you are more alarmed than you need be, and that if the time was ripe for it, you might so qualify that franchise, or, in the words of your own act of parliament, give them a share in the blessings of the constitution with much safety, and much strength to the Protestant ascendancy. If the principle I uphold is erroneous, it is the error and the precise expression in the preamble in your act of parliament.

A right honourable gentleman has said, that a man is not therefore a slave, because he has not a vote : It is true, a man who has no property to be taxed is not a slave, when property is taxed without his consent, because he is not taxed ; but the Catholic who has property is taxed, and then the argument of the member is that a Catholic, though taxed without his consent, and a Protestant not taxed at all, are alike ; that the Catholic body are in the situation of that Protestant who has neither lands, tenements, or hereditaments, therefore free.

The Revolution has been much insisted on, and much misunderstood. Gentlemen speak of the Revolution as the measure and limit of our liberty. The Revolution in Ireland was followed by two events, the loss of trade and the loss of freedom to the Protestant ; and the cause of such losses was our religious animosity. It was not attended by the loss of the elective franchise to the Papist. If, then, the Revolution is the common measure of the condition of both sects, two extraordinary results would follow, that the Protestants should not recover their trade or freedom, and that the Catholics should not lose their franchise ; but the virtue of the Revolution in Ireland was its principles, which were for a century checked in this country, but which did at last exert themselves, and inspire you to re-establish your liberty, and must at last prompt you to communicate a share of that liberty to the rest of the Irish. The Revolution in Ireland, properly understood, is a great and salient principle of freedom ; as misunderstood, it is a measure and entail of bondage.

The part of the subject which I shall now press upon you, is the final and eternal doom to which some gentlemen propose to condemn the Catholic. Some have said they must never get the elective franchise. What, never be free ? Three millions of your people condemned by their fellow subjects to an everlasting slavery in all changes of time, decay of prejudice, increase of knowledge, the fall of papal power, and the establishment of philosophic and moral ascendancy in its place ! Never be free ! Do you mean to tell the Roman Catholic, it is in vain you take oaths and declarations of allegiance ; it would be in vain even to renounce the spiritual power of the pope, and become like any other dissenter ; it would make no difference as to your emancipation. Go to France ; go to America ; carry your property, industry, manufactures and family to a land of liberty ; this is a sentence which requires the power of a god and the malignity of a demon ; you

are not competent to pronounce it ; believe me, you may as well plant your foot on the earth, and hope by that resistance to stop the diurnal revolution which advances you to that morning sun, which is to shine alike on the Protestant and the Catholic, as you can hope to arrest the progress of that other light, reason and justice, which approach to liberate the Catholic and liberalize the Protestant. Even now the question is on its way, and making its destined and irresistible progress, which you, with all your authority, will have no power to resist ; no more than any other great truth, or any great ordinance of nature, or any law of motion which mankind is free to contemplate, but cannot resist ; there is a justice linked to their cause, and a truth that sets off their application.

This debate is a proof of it, scarce had gentlemen, declared the franchise never should be given, when they acknowledge it must, but in such time as the Catholic mind is prepared ; then we are agreed, that Catholics may with safety to the Protestant ascendancy, be admitted to the right of voting, provided they are enlightened Catholics, and we must of course, by that argument, admit that such Catholics as are now enlightened, may with safety be now admitted ; thus in the course of two nights debate, have the two great arguments for their exclusion been surrendered, danger to the revolution and to the ascendancy. It is their ignorance, you now say, not their religion, which is dangerous, and thus the question becomes a point of moral capacity, not of religion ; whether, for instance, Catholics of property are in as fit a state of moral capacity to exercise the right of franchise as a forty shilling freeholder. You have in the course of this night defended the Protestant ascendancy, a Protestant king, a Protestant church, a Protestant parliament, and a Protestant constituency ; here you draw your lines of circumvallation, but you demolish this work, and defy this definition, when you allow that hereafter that constituency, when well instructed, may in some proportion be Catholic. The Protestant ascendancy, then, by your admission, does not require a constituency purely Protestant, but compounded of such men as are civilized substantial freeholders. By the constitution of this country, land should be represented : the land therefore, should be in the hands of a Protestant constituency. If, then, your definition is true in its principle, it must be extended, and you must say, that the Protestant ascendancy requires that all the land, as well as all the votes, should be Protestant ; and this principle will extend to commerce ; and then you must say, that the Protestant ascendancy requires that all the commerce, as well as all the land and all the votes, should be in the possession of Protestants, until at last you sweep the Catholics off the face of the island. The idea of this definition would rest the Protestant state on a sect, not on a people ; that is, it would make its base narrow, in order to make its head secure ; a small foundation and

a great superstructure; Protestant monopoly, distinct from, and fatal to, Protestant ascendancy. You have already permitted the Catholics to purchase land; they are now the numbers, and by your law they may be a considerable portion of landed property; your prudence then would provide, that this union of numbers and landed property, shall have no interest in Protestant freedom, and this you do for the better assuring and preserving the same; you see we adopt names which we do not understand, and set them against things which we might understand. We set up the name of Protestant ascendancy against Protestant power, just as we set up the name Revolution against Protestant freedom. The church has been forgotten no more than the state, and it has been insisted on, that if the Catholics get freedom, they will exercise it to substitute the establishment of their religion in the place of ours. The example of the Presbyterians refutes that argument; they are the majority of Protestants, and they have not destroyed our church establishment. But the argument in its principles is erroneous. Men cannot be free without suffrage, but men may be free without church establishment; and therefore they may be satisfied with the possession of the one, and not dissatisfied without the possession of the other. I have given my sentiments on this the other night. I see no reason to change them. I am not for precipitating any measure; but loving you as I do, I have thought it necessary to lay before you the whole of your situation, and to resist that tide of error which carries away all recollection, I have given my reasons; hereafter your mind will open; and we shall unite Protestant power with Catholic freedom.

Mr. MARCUS BERESFORD endeavoured by, some syllogistical arguments to prove that the House of Commons was a representation not of the people, but of the property of the country, and that under this view the Roman Catholics were as effectually represented as if they had voted for members of parliament. He said much to shew the number of electors in Ireland was much greater than those of England, extent of territory considered.

Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY. Of all the votes I ever have given, or ever shall give in this House, that of this night will be the most painful, because in it I am obliged to differ in opinion from the man whom in this House I respect the most. The firm conviction which I have that the advantage of Ireland is in his mind superior to every other consideration, makes any difference from him peculiarly painful.

I could wish the right honourable gentleman had not made this motion; I know his sentiments are pure, but I cannot see why it was necessary to have a division. If the motion had come from any one of the other side of the House, I should have supposed it was made for the purpose of destroying the good effect of

what we did last Saturday. I have this night heard language in this House such as I never heard in this House before : we have been asked, where are the names of the nobility and gentry of the Roman Catholics? Sir, we have heard much of aristocracy; it is a favourite theme to accuse this side of the House as, an aristocracy; but I never heard such aristocratical language, as if petitioning parliament was not equally the birth-right of the proudest peer and the meanest peasant of the land.

This petition seeks the elective franchise for the Roman Catholics; and it has been said in this House that this franchise shall neither now or ever be granted them. No man despises the prejudices of popery more than I do, and I confess I do not think that it would be wise to extend them the elective franchise at this time; but I am far from saying, and I should be very sorry to suppose, that a time would never come when this measure would be both safe and advantageous to this country.

I have not divulged my opinion upon this subject to many; I have not communicated with any of the Roman Catholics, and I have disclosed my sentiments to a very few Protestants. I know if any one of the objects of this bill had been proposed from this side of the House, it would have been said that we were a factious party of desperate men, who, not being able by our own natural strength to force ourselves into power, were determined at any rate, and by the aid of any kind of men whatever, to carry our measures.

I did think that the measure should have proceeded from a Prince of the house of Brunswick and his ministers; but never did I suppose that it could be introduced into this House without consulting those most immediately affected—the Protestant gentlemen of Ireland. If it was intended to reconcile the Catholics to the Protestants it ought to have been given from the Protestants as favour to the Catholics, proceeding from the kindness of the Protestants, and accepted by the gratitude of the Catholics.

An honourable member has talked much of the factions of the times, of seditious pamphlets, and of inflammatory hand-bills: If any individual has violated the public peace by such practices, if our constitution has been traduced and our establishments decried, why does the honourable gentleman content himself with scolding here? Why does he not drag the offender before the insulted majesty of the laws? Why does he not prosecute him in the court of King's Bench, and exact the penalty of his transgressions? If any have suffered by these publications so alarming in their tendency, it is this side of the House; Administration has not been injured, we only have experienced their ill effects, for the audacious spirit of these books has driven men of sense and weight into the arms of Government, who would otherwise have opposed and reprobated their corruption.

I do not think that rejecting this petition will be an insult to the Roman Catholics. I would insult no man, but I think it is necessary for parliament to grant, and to define the extent of their concessions.

Ireland, last of all nations of Europe, felt the hand of civilization; there are parts of Ireland, of which we can hardly say that they are yet completely civilized; shall we impart the British constitution to men who cannot speak the British language? Shall we offer the privileges of perfect society to those who are hardly in the first stage of civilization. It is true, part of the Roman Catholics, and a large part, must be exempt from this charge, but you must grant to all or to none.

We should wait till our laws have operated, to see their effects; to interest the Catholics in the settlement of property, we have given them the power of purchasing lands: by allowing them education we will enlighten them; and by intermarriage, we will encrease our connection and render our interest the same; by admission to the bar their minds will become liberal; but because we give them these privileges we must not therefore give what should follow their effect; for all those causes should operate before we give them the elective franchise, the ultimatum of power.

Parties are necessary in a free state; but religion when brought into party, has always been destructive; it has been too long so in Ireland; I wish we could forget its consequences, and I hope the time will come, though I may not live to see it, when there will be no difference amidst Irishmen, but that of good and bad citizen.

The House divided on the rejection of the petition,

Ayes for rejecting - 208 — Noes - 23

Tellers for the ayes, Right Hon. David Latouche, and Right Hon. George Ogle;—for the noes, Mr. Forbes and Colonel Hutchinson.

Right Honourable Mr. Latouche then moved, that the petition from the Society of the United Irishmen of Belfast, should be also rejected. The question was put, and the petition rejected with two or three negatives.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 1792.

Mr. CUFFE called the attention of the House to what he considered a breach of privilege of the most atrocious kind. An honourable member [Solicitor General] received a note, that a

certain person [Mr. Smith] would call on him this morning, at ten o'clock, to require an explanation of some expressions which he had uttered in the House of Commons relative to James Napper Tandy. The honourable member informed the messenger he would be at his [Mr. Cuffe's] house at that hour. Mr. Smith accordingly came at the hour appointed, and delivered to the Solicitor General a note, signed James Napper Tandy, which note Mr. Cuffe read, nearly to the following purport :

“ SIR,

“ Understanding you have introduced my name last night into a debate in the House of Commons, and treated it with contumely and contempt ; not to say any thing of the impropriety of attacking an individual in his absence, when it was impossible for him to defend himself ; I request your answer to the following query : Did you, or did you not, mean me personal offence by those expressions ? This question I conceive no gentleman can refuse to answer.”

To which the Solicitor General returned an answer, which Mr. Cuffe also read, nearly as follows :

“ SIR,

“ I have received your note, in which you require an explanation of certain expressions used by me in the House of Commons : such is my sense of my own honour, and the dignity of the House of Commons, that I cannot think of violating either by any explanation.”

Mr. Smith then said, that the consequences of such an answer would probably be very disagreeable. To which Mr. Toler replied, that he believed the consequences would be very disagreeable.

Sometime afterwards Mr. Toler received another letter from Mr. Tandy, which Mr. Cuffe read nearly as follows :

“ SIR,

“ When I called for an explanation of the mention you had made of my name in the House of Commons I expected another answer, than that which you have thought proper to give : if you persist in refusing further explanation on that subject, I must think that what you said on that occasion with respect to me, was personal and premeditated.”

To which Mr. Toler replied, that no other answer would be given. In the evening Mr. Smith called again at Mr. Cuffe's, and said that as this was a public affair, Mr. Tandy would publish the circumstances of the transaction in the public prints. — Whether it was right to take some measures to assert the dignity of the House or not, Mr. Cuffe left with the House to determine, having thus put them in possession of the fact.

Mr. MARCUS BERESFORD said, that after what had been stated by the honourable gentleman, it was unnecessary for him to make any other comment on the subject, than move that James Napper Tandy had been guilty of a gross breach of the privileges of that House.

The SPEAKER said, it was unusual to come to a resolution of that kind until the person had been first brought to the bar; he then moved, that James Napper Tandy be taken into the custody of the Serjeant at Arms, and that he be brought to the bar of the House forthwith.

A similar motion was proposed against William Thomas Smith. Both motions were agreed to, *nem. con.*

A member said, that from what he had heard of the transaction, Mr. Smith had, throughout the whole of the business, conducted himself in the most conciliatory manner; he hoped the House would make some difference between him and Mr. Tandy.

Mr. CUFFE bore testimony of the very proper conduct of Mr. Smith, who had throughout behaved in a very gentleman-like manner, and he had therefore intended to move some mitigation in his favour.

When the other business of the House was over, the Speaker informed the House, that he had issued his warrant for the apprehension of Mr. Tandy; that the messenger had found him, and shewed him the warrant; that Mr. Tandy went in for his hat, escaped through a window, and had not since been found.

Mr. M. BERESFORD requested the messenger might be called in. The messenger being called to the bar said, that he had called at Mr. Tandy's in Bride-street, and had been informed he was at his son's, No. 28, Chancery-lane; the messenger went there and found him; he shewed him the Speaker's warrant, and also his badge of office. Mr. Tandy retired into a parlour, slammed the door after him, and also a second door within side; the messenger supposed he had gone in for his hat, and on enquiry was informed by his son, that he was writing a note, and would be with him immediately; finding he did not come, the messenger enquired again, and was informed by the son, that he believed he had made his escape—that he might go through the house and search for him.

The Deputy Serjeant at Arms corroborated this account, and said he had been at Mr. Tandy's after the messenger had returned, that he had been informed by the son that Mr. Tandy had made his escape.

Mr. MARCUS BERESFORD said, it appeared from the relation of the messenger, that Mr. Tandy saw the order of the Speaker;

and that instead of coming to the bar to endeavour to extenuate the atrocious offence he had committed, he had rescued himself from the messenger, and from his shutting the doors cautiously after him in order to secure his retreat when he quitted the messenger, it was plain he fully understood the meaning of the order; the proper process now was, to move that James Napper Tandy, having rescued himself from the custody of an officer of this House is guilty of a gross contempt of its privileges;—he then made the motion.

HON. DENIS BROWN spoke in very indignant terms of the outrageous proceeding of Mr. Tandy, and thought if the House did not on this occasion assert itself, there was an end of all freedom of deliberation.

The motion passed *nem. con.*

Mr. MARCUS BERESFORD then moved, that an humble address be presented to his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, praying that he would be pleased to issue a proclamation, offering a reward for the apprehension of said Tandy.

Sir L. PARSONS thought this rather an unusual mode of proceeding in the first instance.

Lord JOCELYN agreed with the honourable baronet, that it was an unusual proceeding, and for that reason he agreed to it, as the enormity of the offence was unusual.

Mr. MARCUS BERESFORD said, when the usual process of any court was incompetent to bring an offender to justice, some extraordinary mode must be resorted to. In the present instance there was no intermediate step that could be taken between the Speaker's warrant and the address for a proclamation.

The SPEAKER said, this was not an unusual mode of bringing in offenders; it had been practised in the English House of Commons in the last session, and had been used with effect here in the last session also.

The motion then passed *nem. con.* and the address was ordered to be presented forthwith.

Mr. MARCUS BERESFORD then moved, that James Napper Tandy having presumed to demand an explanation from a member of this House, of words spoken in debate in this House, had been guilty of a gross breach of privilege.

Mr. BROWN [College] said, he could not help thinking that there appeared a very unusual warmth in the proceeding against this man, and he knew nothing in the character of the man that

could justify it; putting his conduct in this instance out of question, which he admitted was very intemperate. He did not think the warmth, they manifested on this occasion, did them any great honour.

Mr. HOBART differed so much from the hon. gentleman, that though he could not say the warmth they shewed in this instance did them any great honour, he would say that if this warmth did not appear, it would have done them the greatest dishonour.

Mr. BROWN moved the previous question, which not being seconded, the Speaker could not put it. The motion of Mr. Beresford then passed in the affirmative, *nem. con.*

The ATTORNEY GENERAL then moved "that his Majesty's Attorney General be directed to prosecute said James Napper Tandy for the said offence."—Agreed to *nem. con.*

Mr. PAUL moved, "that it should be an instruction to the committee on the Popery bill to receive a clause, to repeal so much of the twelfth of George I. and twenty-third of George II. as make the marrying of a Protestant to a Papist by a popish priest, felony of death, without benefit of clergy; and inflict a penalty upon the persons married and present at the marriage, in case of not discovering it within three years." He said these were the most disgraceful and sanguinary laws in the Popish code.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL said, he would not object to a law for lessening the punishment in those cases; but he would not consent to have such marriages legalized. It had been the wish of those who had assisted the honourable baronet in framing the bill, (of which number he had the honour to be one) to frame it so as to give offence to no person whatever; but he did not think that the clergy of this kingdom would ever agree to permitting popish priests to marry Protestants and Papist.

Mr. PAUL said, he thought it disgraceful to humanity that a priest, who might innocently and ignorantly marry two persons together, one of whom without his knowledge was a Protestant, should incur the dreadful penalty of death without benefit of clergy; in great maritime towns, especially where there was a continual influx of people, it would be impossible for him to know the religions of all those persons who were married by him.

Right Hon. JOHN BERESFORD said, that in a business of this great importance, every step should be deliberately considered; nothing should be admitted into this bill without full and fair no-

tice; the bill itself has been slowly brought through the House, that it might be maturely and entirely understood; it has been brought in a fortnight after leave was given; a fortnight had intervened between each reading, and it had been committed for a distant day; but now, just as the House were going into the committee, new clauses were introduced when they had no time to consider them, or know what they were. As to the particular law which the gentleman wished to repeal, he did not see the necessity for repealing it: in large towns, there were always Protestant clergymen to be found, and it would be a very heavy crime, even in them, to marry any person without a licence, especially persons unknown: if this law were repealed, Protestant clergymen would alone be punished, while popish priests would pass with impunity.

Sir HIRCOLES LANGRISHE. The penalty in this case is certainly disproportioned to the crime; there is already a paragraph in this bill enacting "that there shall be no penalty on Protestant clergymen marrying Protestants to Roman Catholics." And three or four words at the end of that clause will do as well as the clause of the honourable gentleman.

Mr. JOHNSON said, he would not only oppose this but any other extension which should be offered to the present bill; upon this ground that nothing should be admitted into it which should not have been properly considered. Notwithstanding all the time that the bill had been before the House, he did not think that it was yet fully considered; if gentlemen designed farther benefits to the Roman Catholics, let them move another distinct bill for the purpose. In a great national question like this, too much time could not be taken on a much less important subject in another country, (the laws of libels) parliament had postponed the bill for consideration from one session to another, that so interesting and momentous a law might be thoroughly understood and investigated.

Mr. PAUL said, he had been impelled by humanity merely to introduce the clause; he had been struck with horror on reading the law in the statute books; but as his motion had met with so much opposition, he would beg leave of the House to withdraw it.

Mr. MAXWELL said, he would propose in the committee on the Popery bill, some amendments which he would then read to the House, in order not to offer any thing by surprise: he hoped he would not from them be supposed an enemy to the bill; but he deemed them necessary to secure the Protestant ascendancy; and he perfectly agreed with those gentlemen who thought the House should give with generosity, and withhold with firmness."

He would introduce a clause into the oath which the bill required the Roman Catholics to take; an oath which had been long the only barrier between them and the Protestants, which, if they disregarded, they might long since have forced their way into that House; but to which they had shewn a most religious observance. His attention was to add to the oath these words: "And I do swear, that I will not consent to any project to overturn the Protestant ascendancy."—This he thought would not detract from the object of the bill, for he supposed no Roman Catholic would refuse this oath.

Another amendment he would propose to the oath, in imitation of the English oath, in order to remove the difficulty of ascertaining who were Roman Catholics—it would be thus: "I *A. B.* do swear, that I am of the Roman religion."

A third amendment would be also copied from the English: it was this—to prevent Popish school-masters educating the children of Protestant parents.

The House then resolved into committee on the bill to relieve his majesty's subjects professing the Roman Catholic religion; Lord Delvin in the chair.

Mr. MAXWELL proposed his first amendment.

Mr. JOHNSON wished the honourable gentleman would define what he meant by the Protestant ascendancy; the first time he had heard the expression was from the mouth of a gentleman of a vigorous imagination, who emphatically stamped a meaning on the words, which the House felt strongly at the moment. But he did not know how, under this clause, an indictment could be framed, or a man convicted under the general crime of an attempt to overturn the Protestant ascendancy.

Mr. MAXWELL said, if the words conveyed a meaning to the person taking the oath it was sufficient; the oath, only related to religious tenets which were equally vague and indefinite; it was restricted to no court of law, it was only registered in *foro conscientie*; but as the House seemed disinclined to the amendment, he would withdraw it.

Sir HERCULES LANGRISHE moved a clause to repeal the law obliging solicitors and attornies to educate their children Protestants. It was absurd to allow Roman Catholics to become of this profession, and yet oblige them to educate their children in a different religion.

The clause was agreed to.

Sir HERCULES LANGRISHE said, that the liberality of the gentlemen of the law, in not opposing the entry of Roman Catho-

lies into that profession, was so strong an argument in favour of extending the facility of admission to the bar, that he would move the following clause :

“ That every person professing the Roman Catholic religion, who had before the 1st day of January, 1792, entered his name at an English Inn of Court as a student, shall be allowed to enter his name in the society of King’s Inns of Ireland, as of the date of his entry in such English Inn of Court, and the treasurer of the said society is hereby empowered and authorised to make such special entry.”

This clause was agreed to.

Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY observed, that by the clause just passed, the Roman Catholics would be put in a more advantageous situation than many Protestant young gentlemen, who had performed all the requisites necessary to going to the bar, save only entering their names at the King’s Inns in Ireland ; he hoped they would be indulged in the same manner it was intended the Catholics should be.

The Prime-Serjeant and Attorney General concurred ; and an amendment was made by which such Protestant students of the law as have entered their names in any one of the Inns of Court in England, previous to the 1st of January, 1792, shall be enabled to enter their names in Ireland, as of the same date as their entry in England.”

The clause being read which went to legalize the intermarriages of Protestants with Roman Catholics,

Mr. BAGWELL objected to it, as having a tendency more powerful than any other cause whatever, of making converts to the Roman Catholic religion.

Sir HERCULES LANGRISHE said, the clause went no further than to restore a liberty which had existed even in the most rigorous times, and to re-establish that which was really and truly a relaxation, not more in favour of Roman Catholics than of Protestants ; and such as must have a tendency to create union and intercourse amongst every class of subjects.

The act of the ninth of William the Third, went no further than to prevent Roman Catholics from becoming heirs, executors, administrators or guardians to any person ; but it did not go so far as to disallow their marriage with Protestants. It went indeed so far as to render their children beggars ; but it did not proceed to stigmatize them with the disgrace of bastardy. It remained for the persecuting period of 1746, to enact a law which *ipso facto* annulled thenceforward every marriage between Protestant and Papist ; an act of eternal separation to the people of the respective

religions, which had now for just forty-six years disgraced our statute books; fortunately for the cause of justice and humannature, the persecuting zeal which dictated this law, defeated its own object; for so loosely worded was the act, that it was only by the transposition of a single *comma*, that the spirit of this act was averted from the cruel purpose of preventing many a virtuous and amiable wife, to guard the reputation of her own chastity, or the legitimacy of her own children. He was happy, however, to know that gentlemen of the profession of the law in modern and moderate times, had too much liberality, not to use every opportunity of construing away those abominable statutes.

He trusted the liberal concessions of the present hour would not be marred by the adoption of a proposition, which would mark with invidiousness a bill, having for its object conciliation and mutual happiness; and that gentlemen would not, under the pressure of old prejudices, destroy all the advantages which must result to posterity from this most material and interesting clause in the bill; and which he was confident must tend more than any other to obviate all insidious dissention, and unite the regards of all sects of subjects.

Mr. COOTE rose to express his love for the Protestants, and his respect for the Roman Catholics. The oftener he considered the present bill, the more was he convinced of its importance. He never could allow, but ever must reject any measure tending to subvert the Protestant ascendancy, or to incroach upon our constitution, so happily established as it is.

The Hon. DENIS BROWNE said, he firmly thought with the right honourable gentleman, but he could not see how the Protestant ascendancy was to be subverted, or the happiness of the constitution encroached on, by the present clause.

With respect to the apprehensions intimated in the course of debate upon this bill, that it would tend to revive the claims of Catholics for forfeited estates, no man had stronger reasons for such fears than himself, as all the estates of his family were purchased under forfeitures. He was also convinced that the greater number of Roman Catholics who now possessed estates in this country, inherited under similar titles: but he entertained no apprehensions whatever upon the subject.

Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY, the Hon. Mr. PERY, and Sir JAMES COTTER, were against expunging the clause.

An amendment was proposed to this clause, for removing the disqualification of Protestants, married to Roman Catholic wives, from voting at elections.

Mr. SECRETARY HOBART said, the bill introduced by his honourable friend [Sir Hercules Langrishe] did propose certain objects which had hitherto the good fortune of meeting the concurrence of the House, and the approbation of the country; and he should be sorry now to see any new matter introduced, which should hazard that unanimity so desirable upon a subject of so much importance. He did not wish to leave it in any man's power to say, that the friends of the measure had, by a side-wind, done what they did not profess or intend to do.

Mr. OGLE said, he would not give his assent to a clause in this bill, which he could not admit in any election bill. There were other indulgences given by the bill to which he had his objections: the bar, for instance; for though he should not object to give to the Catholics every necessary advantage, with respect to agriculture and trade, he could not consider the profession of a barrister in the light of trade. How far it might be wise to extend this profession to Roman Catholics was for the discretion of the House; but for his part he considered a Protestant bar as necessary as a Protestant parliament.

Mr. GRATTAN thought it extremely impolitic, at the very time gentlemen seemed so eager to support the Protestant ascendancy, to seem anxious for the continuance of a law, tending to lessen the number of Protestant electors. It was, in his mind, carrying the idea too far, to suppose female influence, by Catholic wives on Protestant husbands, could injure the Protestant interest upon an election. He thought there was no obstacle so great to the good effects of the present bill, as that of disfranchising every Protestant elector, for availing himself of the benefit it holds out; it would be in fact encouraging with one hand, and at the same time discouraging with the other. The elective franchise was one of the strongest temporal inducements to conformity; but while the disqualifying principle existed, the inducement could have no operation with respect to the married Catholic, who, if he was inclined to conform, would be disfranchised by the non-conformity of his wife; and thus be encouraged to go back to Popery.

He saw, however, it was in vain to debate upon the clause; but he owed to his own consistency the declaration of his sentiments; and however adverse gentlemen might be to join his opinion, he was free to declare, he thought any penalty whatever, annexed to the intermarriage of Protestants and Roman Catholics, injurious to the Protestant ascendancy. The intermarriage of the victorious people with the vanquished people was a policy as old as Alexander the Great; and certainly must be the best possible mode of securing the interests and the influence of the former. So long as it was the law of this country to prevent the marriage of

Protestants with Catholics, those penalties might be right : but now that this law was no longer to exist, and that it became a principle of policy to encourage such intermarriages ; to keep up these penalties was absurd and ridiculous.

With respect to management in the moving of this amendment, it might not be advisable to press it, at the risque of losing the bill altogether ; but he would recommend the principle, as a laudable ground for adoption in an election bill.

Mr. SOLICITOR GENERAL thought it very wrong to hold any thing like a matrimonial dispute ; for his part he was of opinion, that matrimony should be one of the freest trades in the country ; and with this view, he considered it highly absurd, while a law was passed for the encouragement of matrimony between Protestant and Roman Catholic, to continue another law which attached disfranchisement to the very act which it is the wish of parliament to encourage.

The amendment was rejected ; and the clause passed in its original form

The education clause being read :

Sir HERCULES LANGRISHE commented with much point, upon the preposterous policy on which the penal laws respecting the education of Catholics must have been founded. For though all nations, in all ages, were under the impression of a wish for improvement and education amongst them, yet our statute books stood branded with the odium of a law which not only precludes the great body of the people from acquiring any education at home, but subjects any one of them who shall go of himself, or send his child for education, into other countries, to disqualification for ever ; from suing for any claim in any court of law or equity ; from being a guardian, or an executor, or an administrator, or receiving any legacy. And this is not enough, he is not only subjected to these persecuting penalties by the law of the country, but, contrary to all principles of law, his accuser is not obliged to appear to prove his crime, but the accused must prove his own innocence, or be convicted !

The object of the present bill was to do away that obnoxious law, and give the Catholic the full power of educating his children every where, or any where he can procure the best education for them ; and in order to render them the more eligible for this purpose, the bill went also, to repeal so much of the act of the 17th and 18th of Charles II. as obliges all persons opening schools to take out a license from the bishop of the diocese ; by which means the Roman Catholics would be enabled to open seminaries for the education of their youth, in every respect agreeable to their own choice.

Mr. GRATTAN observed, that by the present laws of the college, there were certain oaths necessary to be taken, which prevented Roman Catholics from becoming professors in the learned departments; he therefore intimated an intention of bringing forward a bill at some future day to amend that regulation, if it should be thought inexpedient to do it by the present bill.

Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY said he had no objection to the present bill, for what it did, but rather for what it did not.

It was defective, in so much as it did not give in its fullest extent the benefit of an university education, both to the laity and the clergy of the Roman Catholic religion. He thought if there was any restraint on them in this point, it should be to oblige them to educate their clergy at home. And that the youth of both religions should not be educated separately, but together and in the same university. He had in contemplation a motion to bring forward for this purpose, but not in the present session. It might perhaps be advisable to found another college, and annex it as a branch of the present university. It was a plan which would well deserve the attention of Government, and the liberal support of Parliament. He threw out the idea now, that gentlemen might turn the subject in their thoughts, and come prepared next session to aid it by their suggestions.

Mr. GRAYDON was of opinion, the bill embraced no object more materially important than that of education; but on this subject it did not go far enough. For if the legislature had extended to the Roman Catholics the just and necessary benefits of an home education, it was their duty also to provide as fully as possible for that education, under proper and well regulated establishments, and to prevent the necessity of their resorting to other foreign universities; for he was fully convinced if we did not allow the Roman Catholics in this country education in our university, the bill could never effect its most desirable objects. With respect to the clergy of both persuasions, he did not think it would be advisable to educate them together, lest it might tend to re-excite those theological controversies, and polemical disputations which had already done so much mischief in this country, and fomented so much the rancour of sectaries against each other.

Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY replied, that he believed the spirit of religious controversy on the subject of mysteries, was now totally exploded; and mankind were content to read and admire the great truths of the gospel in the majestic simplicity of their own language, unperplexed by the mystical jargon of school theology. But if ever a Roman Catholic and a Protestant di-

vine in this country should attempt to amuse themselves by reviving any public controversy, about theological mysteries, and that he should have the honour of a seat in parliament, he would find a way to silence them. Such subjects were now fallen into the utter contempt they deserved, and it would be the fault of the legislature, if ever they suffered the public mind to be agitated by any such contemptible nonsense.

Mr. BROWNE (of the College) thought the education of youth as much an object of legislation, as any other purpose whatever; because by it were to be inculcated the principles that govern mens opinions and conduct through life. With respect to what had been urged by his honourable friend [Mr. Ponsonby] touching the education of Protestant and Catholic youth together, there were he knew different opinions in the university: the junior fellows were friends to the measure; but the seniors were of a different opinion. He wished however, when gentlemen were carving the college, and making new ones, and disposing of revenues as they pleased, they would condescend to recollect, that it was part of the charter of the college, that no new seminary for education should be erected without their consent, unless by royal licence, which therefore at least would be necessary, to preserve their chartered rights. He thought also, it would not be paying them much compliment, to advise with them a little upon such an occasion, or to suppose they might be in some measure judges, as to the expediency of ingrafting a different college upon their stock, or the expediency or practicability of admitting Roman Catholics into the present; he should not however be surprized to see plans formed, without thinking of them at all, (in the same manner as they were treated with respect to the famous board of education) from the contempt and neglect which they had experienced from Government for thirty years past; a treatment totally different from what they had experienced in former reigns, which tended to discourage literature, emulation, and exertion, and which was one of the curses attending the affronted and degraded state of Ireland; a treatment they did not deserve, since they would not yield in real learning to any seminary. The nation of Ireland, ought to foster its own university, and reprobate any government which did not do so.

Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY rose to explain, and to assure his honourable and learned friend that no disrespect or inattention whatever was intended to the university by either himself or his right honourable friend, [Mr. Grattan] nor did he believe the Government of the country would adopt any measure of the nature proposed, without previously consulting the university.

The clause moved by Mr. Grattan, for enabling the Roman Catholics to become professors of anatomy, botany, and Chemistry, and referred by the House to the committee, being now read, it was warmly opposed by

Doctor DUIGENAN, who explained that the professorships in these sciences in Trinity College were supported on a fund, specifically appropriated to the purpose, by the will of Alderman Sir Patrick Dunn; and he therefore hoped parliament would not so far infringe the intention of the donor, or the privileges of the university, as to throw open to Roman Catholic, benefits that were specifically appropriated by the testator to Protestant professors, long before any such measure as the bill now before the House was thought of. He expressed his apprehensions, that if once the college dignities were thrown open to Roman Catholics, the Protestant influence there would in time be subverted by Popery. After a short and desultory debate, or rather conversation, the clause was rejected on the consideration of the present fund for supporting the professorships being a private donation, and subject to the conditions specified by the donor.

The committee having finished the bill, Lord Delvin acquainted the House that they were ready to report.

The report was ordered to be received to-morrow.

Mr. STAPLES rose to congratulate the House and the nation, upon the firmness that the representative body had shewn upon the refusing the Roman Catholics every thing injurious to the Protestant ascendancy, and their liberality, at the same time, in granting them every possible advantage, consistent with that ascendancy; he desired most particularly to give his hearty thanks to his right honourable friend high in office, [Mr. Hobart] for the steady attention he had upon this occasion shewn to the welfare of the country.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 1792.

Reported the Roman Catholic bill. Ordered to be engrossed.

Mr. FORBES moved for leave to bring in his annual place and pension bill.

Colonel Smyth, of the Independent Dublin Volunteers, appeared at the bar, in custody of the Serjeant at Arms, in com-

pliance with the order of yesterday, on a charge of breach of privilege, for carrying a message of an honourable kind from James Napper Tandy, Esq; to John Toler, Esq; his Majesty's Solicitor General, demanding an explanation of some asperities relative to Mr. Tandy, which had fallen from Mr. Toler in the course of Monday night's debate in the House of Commons.

Mr. SPEAKER said—Mr. Smyth, you have been guilty of a violent breach of the privileges of this House; what have you to urge in your exculpation?

Mr. Smyth answered, that he had ever had the highest respect for the dignity of parliament, and did not know that in the manner he had conducted himself, he was committing any violation of its privileges; if he had, he was concerned for it. So soon as he had heard of the order of the House of last night, he immediately surrendered himself into the custody of the Serjeant at Arms; and he was now come to abide the discretion of the House.

Mr. CUFFE bore testimony of the very polite, gentlemanly and conciliatory manner in which Mr. Smyth had conducted himself through the whole of the affair alluded to, and urged his amenable conduct in coming voluntarily to surrender himself to the discretion of the House, in the custody of their officer. He passed high encomiums on Mr. Smyth's character and respectability; and hoped the House would assent to his being discharged out of custody.

Mr. MARCUS BERESFORD, however disinclined to do violence to the feelings of a gentleman, could not in the present instance forget the dignity of parliament, and the enormity of a breach of its privilege; he concluded by moving an amendment in the words, "being first reprimanded by the Speaker."

Mr. ATTORNEY GENERAL and Mr. CORRY were severe in their animadversions on the enormity of a breach of privilege which infringed on the freedom of debate, and strongly urged the necessity of an exemplary reprimand.

Mr. GRATTAN, Mr. GRAYDON, Mr. GRACE, Mr. CUFFE, Lord DELVIN, and the Honourable DENIS BROWNE, were zealous in their encomiums on the character and gentlemanly conduct of Mr. Smyth, and eager to render the reprimand, if indispensably necessary to the dignity of the House, as mild as the nature of the case, and the lenity of the House could admit.

The question being put, that Mr. Smyth be reprimanded; was carried in the affirmative; and he was reprimanded accordingly in the usual terms, and then discharged.

Several members who, in the course of the debate, had manifested the warmest concern for Mr. Smyth, immediately followed him out of the House.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 1792.

The Catholic bill was read a third time. On putting the question that the bill now pass,

Sir HERCULES LANGRISHE said—Mr. Speaker, I cannot take leave of this subject without congratulating you and the country on the spirit and liberality that has attended this bill in its progress, and finally brought it to so desirable a conclusion.

I consider this bill, thus passed, as a new covenant, a new charter of amity and intercourse amongst us; and I feel a pride I cannot express, in observing that what you have granted to your Catholic brethren, you have granted with cordiality and good will—with a confident heart, an unreluctant hand, and an unanimous voice. Whilst your constitutional pride justly re-sented the rashness of a few, your justice distinguished the meritorious conduct of the many; and in the intemperance of the moment you did not forget the unimpeachable demeanor of an hundred years.

Whatever you have given, or whatever you have with-held, you have at least given them the most decisive testimony of your sympathy and affection, by inviting them to join with you as one people in alliance and kindredship, in the nearest and dearest of human connexions. But I will tell my Catholic friends, (and I am not afraid in whatever I may say, or whatever I may do, or whatever I may forbear to do for them, that they will doubt the sincerity of my ancient and inflexible attachment) I will tell them, that notwithstanding the insatuated industry, that was at work to provoke the pride, to inflame the passions, and revive the prejudices that have so long kept us asunder; notwithstanding these rash endeavours, the House of Commons yet retained the temper of benignity, and the concessions they made were in themselves important.

When you cast off your narrow prejudices and invidious distinctions, by inviting them to intermarriage; when you gave them the free choice and exercise of education; when you gave them the participation in the most honourable, the most lucrative, and the most comprehensive profession in the country; you

made them concessions of great magnitude; you conferred favours for which their gratitude is due; and I will be answerable for it, they will pay the debt.

I will tell the Roman Catholics (and I think they will be inclined to place confidence in what I say) that so long as they persevere (which I believe they always will) in their attachment to the king and constitution, submission to the supreme and settled authority of the state, and obedience to the laws, they will find, as they now do, the Government of the country treat them as friends, and the Parliament embrace them as brothers; and that so long as the present constitution lasts, or there be any settled government at all, such principles and such conduct must be their best, and ought to be their only, advocates.

The most powerful adversaries we, who have laboured with sincerity and solicitude to serve them, had to encounter, were the rash and mischievous publications which affected to plead their cause. And were it not for the wise and timely interposition of the great and respectable body of the Roman Catholics, to whom I have often alluded, and of whom every gentleman has spoken in terms of the highest respect, we should neither have been justified in our undertaking, nor successful in our conclusion. However, I have now the final gratification to see this high testimony of parliament in favour of the Catholics of Ireland, and I am satisfied.

Mr. GRATTAN rose to say, that the right honourable baronet had certainly no need to be concerned at the circumstance of the sentiments being made public, for his sentiments, whether recorded in letters or otherwise, were such as must ever do him honour.

The bill then passed, and was carried to the Lords by Sir Hercules and a great number of the members.

Mr. GRATTAN wished to know why the return had not been made of the fees demanded by the officers of the port of Dublin, agreeably to the order of the House, which had been made a fortnight ago.

Right Hon. JOHN BERESFORD said, the secretary of the commissioners had been served with the order, and he had furnished every officer, whom he thought concerned, with copies of it; why the return had not been made he knew not, but he confessed he thought the order an extraordinary one, as it tended to make men criminate themselves, and that before any charge had been brought against them.

Mr. GRATTAN said, the proper time for bringing a charge was when this return was made, if there should appear ground for one. His principal object in calling for the return, was to procure documents in order to ascertain, by act of parliament, the fees which should be paid in future; and he had taken up the business at the instance of several merchants with whom he had conversed on the subject.

Mr. BERESFORD thought the merchants should bring forward a charge against the officers, in the first instance, if they had extorted; but he observed, that ascertaining the fees payable to officers, would have ill effects both on commerce and revenue. Of what are called fees, he said, many were of that kind, that could not be ascertained, since they were gratuities which were given to officers for extra trouble; for attending to do business at hours, in which they were not bound to attend by law. He was confident that the merchants themselves would not wish to have them fixed.

Mr. GRATTAN said, that the will of the merchants should be his: in the mean time, he hoped the order of the House would be complied with.

Ordered, that the Speaker issue his warrant for electing a knight of the shire for the county Meath.

The Committee on brewery regulations adjourned to Monday.

Mr. BROWNE (of the College) called the attention of the House, and of the nation, to a subject of a very important nature, the misapplication of the loan funds. He said, the surplus of the loan funds, after paying all interest, &c. did at March last amount to the enormous sum of 200,000*l.* and although in the last six months, 50,000*l.* due on the vote of credit, had been paid off, there still remained a surplus at Michaelmas of 170,000*l.* and it would, by March next, again rise probably to 200,000*l.* He observed, there could be no possible pretence for keeping so large a sum in the treasury, or in collector's hands; the only pretence that was set up was, that it was necessary to secure the public creditor against any accident, alarm, or failure of revenue. The failure of revenue was now a very improbable supposition; however he would leave for that purpose, 50,000*l.* and it was ample. The necessity of more being left was refuted by the recollection that, in 1779, the surplus was only 320,000*l.* in 1781, only 3000*l.* in 1783, only 40,000*l.* and yet the public creditor was not alarmed, though the debt was then nearly as great as it is now. In the year 1780, a motion had been made, and supported by many most respectable gentlemen, to apply the surplus whenever it exceeded 10,000*l.*; his motion, therefore must be

considered as moderate, which only applied it, when it exceeded fifty.

If government refused so moderate a motion, what could be reasonably supposed to be their objection, but that they applied this enormous surplus to the current services of the year, perhaps to the purposes of corruption? To that, the sinking fund of the nation, that sacred deposit which had been given only for particular purposes, was probably applied to hide the extravagance of Government, who, by feeding upon that, avoided to come forward and ask for new loans or new taxes, and thereby put forth a boast and appearance of œconomy, while they were in reality more extravagant than ever. As to reductions of debt, the idea seemed to be totally relinquished; so that the sinking fund, the alienation of which in England brought the country almost to ruin, and the restoration of which to its proper purposes, has been made the great glory and boast of her present minister, was here likely for ever to be applied, to idle, or perhaps to bad purposes—of corruption, or of subjugation; for he knew there were men, though they dare not avow it in the House, who held that a national debt was a good thing, because it kept a country under.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER combated Mr. Browne's statements, and denied that the surplus of the duties amounted to so large a sum as 200,000*l.*; the whole of the really existing surplus he asserted was necessary for the security of the public credit; and he ridiculed the idea of this surplus being applied by Government to sinister purposes, as it was impossible to draw money from the treasury but for known and acknowledged uses.

Mr. BROWNE observed, that though his statement as to the amount of the surplus might be incorrect, the right honourable baronet had not said a word against the principle of his motion; viz. that the surplus of the loan duties over and above 50,000*l.* should be laid out in the diminution of the debt. He did not indeed charge Government with drawing money from the treasury for sinister purposes, but he had been informed, on the most credible authority, that they intercepted the public money before it reached the treasury? He had been asked, whether he really believed the loan surplus had been, or could be, applied to the current services of the year? He answered, he did most firmly believe it; and he as firmly believed, that one of those current services was corruption.

Mr. Secretary COOKE spoke a few words explanatory of some of the accounts.

Mr. VANDELEUR spoke in support of the motion.

Mr. Secretary HAMILTON asked, with rather an eager tone, had the honourable gentleman asserted that Government anticipated the public money before it reached the treasury?

Mr. BROWNE, after some hesitation rose and said, the manner in which the question had been asked, had made him doubtful whether he should answer it. He repeated, however, he had been credibly informed the fact was so.

Mr. Secretary HAMILTON said, the fact not only was not so, but could not be so: he then went into a history of the process of the public money, from the collectors hand, in order to prove his assertion.

Mr. BROWNE replied, by asking in his turn, whether Government never applied money lying, in the Stamp-office for instance, to any purpose before it was paid into the treasury?

To this Mr. HAMILTON answered, it was sometimes applied to the incidental calls of the establishment itself.

Right Hon. JOHN BERESFORD also acknowledged, that money is frequently applied in the payment of salaries, on the respective establishments, parliamentary bounties, &c. before it was paid into the treasury.

Sir HERCULES LANGRISHE stated, that there were three ways in which the collectors discharge themselves; first, by payments of incidental charges on the establishments; payment of parliamentary bounties; and by payments into the exchequer.

Mr. GRAYDON said, he knew no power more dangerous than this of arresting the public money, by a Lord Lieutenant's warrant; he instanced a particular case, where money to a considerable amount had been issued from the Stamp-office, on this authority, for the purpose of purchasing ground and building houses, &c. He did not suspect Government of the folly of sending money into the treasury, and then drawing it out again for clandestine uses; they had this less obvious and more dangerous mode of disposing of the public treasure: he declared against it, and should next session bring forward some proposition on that subject.

Sir HERCULES LANGRISHE and Mr. HOLMES said a few words against the motion and Mr. GRATTAN spoke in favour of it: when the question being put, "that the order of the

day be now read," it passed in the affirmative; of course Mr. Browne's motion fell to the ground.

The House then resolved into a committee on the spirit licence bill; made some progress and reported.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 1792.

Captain PACKENHAM moved for leave to bring in a bill for the encouragement of seamen and marines.

Sir JOHN BLAQUIERE, for a bill to amend certain laws relative to inland navigation; and

Mr. MASON, for a bill to ascertain the manner in which malt shall be sold.

Leave was given to bring them in.

As also, on the motion of the ATTORNEY GENERAL, a bill for repairing and preserving the walls of the river Liffey, eastward of Carlisle bridge.

On that of the SOLICITOR GENERAL, a bill for repairing the road from Kilkenny to Clogheen, and on

That of Mr. GRATTAN, a bill for better regulating the coal trade of the city of Dublin.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1792.

A bill was presented and read a first time, for better enabling persons to work mines of coals, metals and fossils, and for improving the harbour of Arklow.

The House sat in committee, to enquire into the effect of the spirit regulation and proceeded to examine;

Mr. Fisher, an Englishman, superintendant of a brewery in this city. The sum of his evidence was, that he had come to Ireland in order to engage in the brewing business, if he found it advantageous, but that not finding due encouragement he had not entered into the trade; that as good beer could be made here as any imported, by using a greater quantity of material; that his opinion, and that of all the English brewers with

whom he had conversed, was, that the present flourishing state of the English brewery was owing to the suppression of the use of gin in that country. On being asked, by Mr. John Beresford, whether there was less or more spirit distilled at present, in England, than previous to the passing of the gin-act? He answered, that in his opinion there was less. [This opinion Mr. Beresford declared unfounded, as the quantity of spirit distilled at present, in England, was considerably greater than previous to the passing of that act.] Mr. Fisher believed that the sale of malt liquor in this country, depended on the quality of it. The quantity of materials used to a hogshead of porter, he stated at fourteen stone of malt and six pound of hops. The expence of manufacturing a hogshead of porter, he said, was from eight to nine shillings. Mr. Beresford thought this charge so extravagant, that he wished Mr. Fisher to state the particulars that constituted this expence; which, he said, he was at present unprepared to do minutely: in general, however, the expence consisted in labourers wages, keeping of horses, fuel, rent, and wear and tear of brewery. The weekly sale of the brewery, in which he was concerned, was one hundred and ten hogsheads; the number of horses eight; that of labourers eighteen, at seven shillings per week.

Mr. Fisher's examination was here interrupted by the confused noise of persons on the roof; the House was alarmed: Mr. Thoroton, the clerk, went up to examine what had happened, and in a few moments gave notice from above, that the roof was on fire, and that the dome would probably fall within five minutes. The Speaker instantly resumed the chair, and put the question of adjournment, which passed, *nem. con.*

Notwithstanding every possible assistance was immediately given, the progress of the fire was so dreadfully rapid, that in less than two hours the House of Commons, whose beautiful architecture and disposition had been since its construction the admiration of Europe, was burned to the ground.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 1792.

The members having assembled in the coffee-room, as the House had been entirely destroyed by the fire of the day before,

The SPEAKER said, he was happy in being able to inform the House, that notwithstanding the dreadful accident which had happened, none of the records or journals of the House were destroyed, except the roll which contained the signatures

of the members, and which had been burned with the table upon the floor, in a drawer of which it lay. He bore the most honourable testimony to the spirited persevering exertions of the Lord Mayor, Alderman Warren, Mr. Sheriff Norton, and the gentlemen of the college in particular, and to the military who attended in general; the efforts of the people of all descriptions were most anxiously employed for the preservation of the building, and the protection of every article of importance; their exertions had been crowned with a great degree of success in preventing any farther mischief than had occurred.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL observed, that the dreadful conflagration which most of the members had witnessed must have made a very serious impression on their minds; he understood that the public were also affected by it: he considered it therefore necessary to have a committee appointed for the purpose of enquiring into the cause and origin of this unfortunate event; he would accordingly move "that such committee be appointed."

Sir EDWARD NEWENHAM seconded the motion; and a committee was appointed accordingly, and ordered to sit to-morrow, and every ensuing day until the inquest is completed.

The names of defaulters were called over, and several members, for whom no excuse was made, were ordered into custody of the Serjeant at Arms.

The PROVOST moved for leave to bring in a bill to remove certain doubts respecting aliens taking mortgages on lands. Leave given, and that Mr. Beresford and the Provost do bring in the same.

The PROVOST, according to order, brought in the bill forthwith; which was read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time on Thursday.

Mr. GRATTAN, pursuant to order, brought in a bill to prevent the excessive price of coals in the city of Dublin; and for other purposes; which was read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time on Thursday.

Captain PACKENHAM brought in, according to order, a bill to encourage seamen and marines employed in the royal navy, by rendering it easy to remit their wages to this kingdom; and also by providing in this country for the payment due for wages; which was read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time on Thursday.

The royal mining company bill was read a second time, and committed for Thursday.

The inland navigation bill, the revenue bill, the regulations for encouraging breweries, and the regulation of spirit licences, were all ordered to be taken into consideration on Friday.

Adjourned to Thursday.

THURSDAY, MARCH 1, 1792.

☞ *The members assembled in the large room in the New Buildings, at the west of the house, which was intended to have been the repository of the parliamentary records: the room, considering the shortness of the time, has been fitted up with every possible convenience.*

Mr. HOLMES, chairman of the select committee appointed to try the merit of the petition of William Todd Jones, Esq; complaining of an undue election and return for the borough of Lisburn, reported the resolutions of the committee; which are in substance:

Resolved, That it is the opinion of this committee, that George Hatton, Esq; and John Moore, Esq; were duly elected and duly returned burgesses to serve in the present parliament for the borough of Lisburn.

Resolved, That it is the opinion of this committee, that the petition of William Todd Jones, Esq; was not frivolous or vexatious.

That report was agreed to.

Colonel BLAQUIERE begged leave to call the attention of the House for a few minutes. He said, that at the late unfortunate circumstance which had taken place (alluding to the fire on Monday night last) he had been an eye witness of the uncommon exertions of the students of the university, who most cheerfully assisted in supplying water on that unhappy occasion; he counted upwards of thirty of them who were exceedingly active, and rendered very effectual service. He also bore testimony to the praise-worthy conduct of the military on the same occasion; and said, if there was no impropriety in it, he should move that the approbation of that House of the conduct of the students of the university on the late event should be conveyed to them through the medium of the Provost; and also that the approbation of the House of the conduct of the military should be conveyed to them through the medium of the Commander in Chief. He however made no motion.

Mr. BROWN (of the College) expressed his very great satisfaction that the spirit and alacrity which the gentlemen of the

college had evinced on a late occasion, was such as to entitle them to the approbation of the House; he was sure that the approbation of that House would be considered by them as the greatest mark of honour that could be bestowed on them; and next to that, the highest gratification to them would be, if the House should be pleased to restore them, in some degree, to that indulgence which they formerly enjoyed of being admitted to the gallery of the House; and he hoped that their conduct on a late event would operate strongly in their favour.

The SPEAKER also bore testimony of the active exertion of the gentlemen of the college on a late event, and he also expressed himself in the warmest terms of approbation of the conduct of the citizens of Dublin on that occasion, who seemed to be actuated with one mind in giving every assistance in their power.

Mr. GRATTAN was happy at the favourable sense the House entertained of the good conduct of the gentlemen of the college, and hoped this sense would not end in mere approbation; he hoped they would be restored to, what he would not call a right indeed, but what certainly was a very antient indulgence they had enjoyed, that of admission to the gallery under proper regulations; this indulgence may be subject to the abuse of temporary licentiousness, but under the observation and controul of the House, and the vigilance of the Speaker, that temporary licentiousness must be speedily suppressed.

Right Hon. Mr. BERESFORD observed, that there were standing orders by which the House should be governed; and the enforcement of these orders was in the hand of a gentleman who knew how to relax them when it was proper to do so; and who had always done so, as far as he could consistently with propriety, for the convenience of the public. Any thing like a resolution on this subject dictating to the chair, he thought improper; the more so as gentlemen did not yet know how far themselves could be accommodated in this room, and as there was no way to the gallery but through the body of the House.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said, that while the Speaker had borne honourable testimony to the services of others, he had forgotten his own; he hoped, however, the House would not forget them, but would leave in his hands the power of enforcing or relaxing the orders in this instance at discretion.

Major HOBART did not wish to exclude any description of gentlemen; but he must say, that if indiscriminate admission were granted to those of the university, who, he had heard, were not

fewer than 900, the citizens of Dublin, to whom the House owed as much respect, must be excluded.

Mr. GRATTAN said, the right honourable gentleman was mistaken in point of fact, when he asserted that the regulation which excluded the students, tended to accommodate the citizens; the truth was, that by that regulation the citizens as well as the students were excluded; for by it they were obliged to wait for hours in the avenues of the House, in order to beg a disengaged member to introduce them; hence it was, that on some late very important questions, their gallery was empty, the public did not think the abilities of gentlemen so very captivating as to undergo a harrassing attendance of hours to hear a display of them; the regulation in fact went to exclude, not accommodate, the public. As to any inconvenience that might result from admitting the gentlemen of the college, he observed that it was an indulgence they had long enjoyed before the present Speaker came to the chair, and though they might sometimes have been guilty of impropriety, that impropriety was immediately corrected by the admonition of the House, and no material inconvenience was experienced. At present he thought there was very good reason for again indulging those gentlemen. The Chair would please to recollect that the general sense of the House had approved of their conduct; he hoped that approbation would not be coupled with an interdict against them; the Chair he was confident had too just a sense of its own dignity to submit to a mandatory suggestion from any gentleman on either side of the House.

The SPEAKER professed, that in adopting the regulation alluded to, his only design was to accommodate every member of the House, by preventing some gentlemen from filling the gallery to the exclusion of others. He observed, that the state of their gallery now was such as made it dangerous to admit large numbers, the balustrade by which it was surrounded being too weak to bear any considerable pressure. He wished he could be able to reconcile his duty to the members of the House, with his good wishes to admit the gentlemen of the university, and he should take every means to accommodate them as far as possible; but it must be left to himself to find those means.

Mr. BROWNE said, that conscious an order existed to exclude strangers from the gallery, he had made no motion on this subject; but he would take leave to suggest to the Chair, whether if the indiscriminate admission to the gentlemen of the college could not be granted, it might not be convenient to admit a certain description of them, and appropriate a part of the gallery to their reception.

Sir A. STEWART hinted the propriety of making application to the Lord Lieutenant for a pecuniary recompence to the military, &c. who had distinguished themselves by their exertions in extinguishing the fire.

Mr. HUTCHINSON said he had heard with great satisfaction the very honourable testimony which had been borne to the conduct of the gentlemen of the university from the chair, and from all sides of the House.

He said he did not rise to take advantage of those feelings of gratitude with which he thought the House was very justly impressed, nor did he mean at present to bring forward any motion upon the subject, because he was well aware that in the place in which they were then assembled it would be extremely difficult to find accommodation for any considerable number of persons; he thought right however to mention that he would at a future time bring forward a motion, the object of which should be to restore to the gentlemen of the college that privilege which they had so long enjoyed.

He said, he lamented that it had suffered a temporary interruption, but he trusted that the cause from whence that interruption had proceeded did no longer continue to influence the mind of any person that heard him; it was, he hoped, forgotten in their useful and honourable exertions for the public service in the hour of calamity, and for the preservation of that House of Parliament into which it was his object to procure their re-admission.

He said, there had been much conversation about the gratitude that was due to the gentlemen of the university, but that for his own part he could not appreciate the value of that feeling which conferred no benefit, denied the restoration of an ancient privilege, and only continued an existing restraint.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL hoped no indulgence would be given to the gentlemen of the university or others which might expose the safety or convenience of the members, as universal admission to those gentlemen would certainly do in the present state of the gallery.—As a father and as a citizen, he professed he had the strongest objections to the indiscriminate admission of the gentlemen of the college—in his opinion it tended to draw them away from their proper business—was not always useful to them—and could not be granted without excluding the citizens of Dublin;—however, he was sure the members of that House would always be ready to introduce any of those gentlemen whom they might find at the doors, for himself he should always do it with the utmost cheerfulness.

Mr. M. BERSFORD presented a bill to amend an act for the better securing his Majesty's revenue arising from forfeited recognizances; which was read a first time.

MONDAY, MARCH 5, 1792.

The House in committee to enquire into the effect of the regulation relative to the brewery and distillery sat, and re-examined Mr. Madders, brewer, whose evidence was, that expence of manufacturing, &c. an hogthead of porter was 12s.—that he had a capital of 6000*l.* in the business, which did not produce him more than 5*l.* 18s. 6*d.* per cent. per ann. profit—that he did not believe gratuities were given by brewers to their customers, though his customers had told him so.

Mr. Guinness, brewer, was examined, whose testimony was, that at the present price of malt—22s. the barrel—he could make no profit at all—believed that persons creeping into the brewing business and wishing to procure customers, gave douceurs, but none else. He produced a certificate signed by his customers, stating that his porter was equal if not superior to any imported, and that he had not given douceurs.

Mr. Walker, of Cork, distiller, was examined—About four years ago he had found the agriculture of the county of Cork in such a state, that he could not procure a sufficiency of barley for his distillery, and the malt so bad, that he was obliged to build a large house for the purpose of making malt himself;—but since that time to the present the barley market had been increasing, so that a very considerable redundancy was now sent from that county to Dublin and elsewhere. His house malted more than any house in the kingdom—45,000 barrels per year. There are other maltsters in Cork besides himself, from whom a Mr. Trant, of this city, distiller, drew very large quantities of malt.

The increase of malt he attributed to the increased demand for it by the brewery and distillery—the former was in Cork a thriving trade;—he had heard that the brewers of Cork were in the habit of bribing to procure customers, and that this practice had greatly injured the business. In answer to a question from Mr. Grattan, he acknowledged that he had been in the brewing trade, and quitted it for that of the distilling.

Mr. Brophy, distiller, was called in, he observed that much having been said of his former evidence, he wished to be sworn. Right Hon. Mr. Beresford said, there could be no objection to his giving a voluntary oath;—he was accordingly sworn below the bar by Alderman Warren.

He said the average price of malt from March to November last was 17s. per barrel.

	£.	s.	d.
Of malt there go 9 stone to the barrel of ale, which at 17s. the barrel of malt, is	0	12	9
Hops 2 <i>½</i> lb. at 1 <i>s.</i> 3 <i>d.</i> per lb.	0	3	1 <i>½</i>
Excise on a barrel of ale	0	3	0
Expence of manufacturing ditto	0	2	0
Total expence	1	0	10 <i>½</i>

Selling the barrel then at 24s. the profit on it was somewhat more than 3s.

He had heard that bribes were given, but he did not know it to be the fact—acknowledged he had left the brewery because there were practices carried on which he could not comply with, namely, giving *douceurs*, &c. Mr. Grattan observed, that he had said that he did not *know* that these practices really prevailed, and yet he quitted the business because he *knew* they did.

The distillery he thought was on the decline in Dublin, but he could not compare the present distillation with that of any former period—The quantity of spirits distilled he thought was diminished, but he could not compare the present distillation with that of any past year—He believed the testimony given by Mr. Edwards on a former day to be true, and Mr. Grattan observed that part of that evidence was, that the distillery was in a flourishing state—He thought the revenue laws of late years had brought much of the distilled spirit into public view, which accounted for the apparent increase, and thought the distiller had less profits than usual.

Mr. Parvifol, brewer, gave testimony, the tendency of which was, that by making good drink the consumption of malt liquor might be increased so as totally to preclude the importation of English malt liquor—that he had 7s. profit on a hogshead of porter, and 3s. on a barrel of ale, selling the former at 2l. 7s. and the latter at 1l. 3s. but that he derived these profits in a great measure from an improvement in the mode of brewing suggested by Mr. Long, by which he saved one half the hops commonly used.

Mr. Reynolds, of Sallins, brewer, was examined—He carried on the brewing trade at Sallins partly on his own and partly on a subscribed capital—The allowance he gave to subscribers for the use of their money was 12l. per cent. and he also gave 5l. per cent. premium on the sale of the liquor—He makes two kinds of porter—one at 2l. 16s. the hogshead—the other at 2l. 7s. and finds much more ready sale for the better kind than for the inferior—was confident if the porter was made good the sale would be rapid—was confident that customers were often seduced away by bribes, and had gained some himself by presents at his entrance into business—Liquor had often been laid at his door by customers, which he believed they were bribed to do—of the late regulations, that one was certainly useful, which left the brewer free from restrictions, and he derived advantage from being permitted in the country to brew small beer as well as strong—As to the quantity of malt, he thought 7 stone fully sufficient for an hogshead of porter—On being asked how the brewer was benefited by a freedom from the restriction that made him put in 6½ stone, when 7 stone is a quantity for good drink, he answered that the brewery, like other manufactures,

is improving, and the brewers have now learned to extract more from the malt than they had done—He had local advantages at Sallins, yet would sell his concerns for one-third of what they had cost him, were he enabled to carry on business in Dublin—He also had learned from Mr. Long the secret of brewing so as to save one-half the hops.

Mr. Trant, distiller's, testimony went to prove, that there is scarcely any profit on the distilling of a barrel of malt—not more than 10*d.* at most; and that there had been for many years as much spirits distilled as at present, though they had not appeared in the public accounts, as now, from the operation of the laws.

Mr. Fisher, whose testimony had been interrupted by the fire on Monday, was called in; he stated the expence of manufacturing a hoghead of porter at 9*s.* 6*d.*—which he accounted for by enumeration of the different items of expence in the brewery, in which he is concerned, for one year. *viz.*

Labourers' wages, coopers, brewers, horses, fuel, }	£.1,626
repairs of brewery, machinery and utensils, }	
Casks, wear and tear of brewery, -	441

Total 2,067

Which sum divided by 4320, the number of hogheads brewed in the year, gave the net average of the expence of a hoghead.

The evidence of the brewers and distillers being now closed,

The Right Hon. JOHN BERESFORD rose to propose some resolutions to the committee, founded on the papers lying before them, and corroborated by the evidence—they were in substance,

Resolved, That it appears to this committee that the quantity of home-brewed and imported malt liquor, consumed within the three quarters, ending Christmas 1791, exceeded the consumption of the three quarters, ending Christmas 1790, by 57,534 barrels.

That the quantity of spirits consumed in the three quarters, ending Christmas 1790, exceeded the consumption of the three quarters, ending Christmas 1791 by 322,563 gallons.

That the consumption of malt liquor having so much increased in those periods, and that of spirituous liquors so much diminished, the regulations have been effectual.

On the first resolution being put,

Mr. GRATTAN said, the last resolution is falacious;—it says that the consumption of spirit has diminished and that of malt liquor increased, and that for so much the purposes of the regulation have had the desired effect.—Now the decrease of the consumption of spirit has been almost entirely confined to the foreign spirit, and that decrease has proceeded from high price, not from regulation; and high price being temporary the decrease will be temporary, and not as your resolution would sug-

gest, the steady effect of law; that part of the resolution which relates to malt is also fallacious, for the encrease of the consumption of malt liquor has been principally the encrease of imported beer, and this was not the object of your regulation, but the contrary, for one of the professed objects was the home brewery, and not its rival the brewery of England.—The resolution is a *non sequitur*, it attempts to attribute to regulations what notoriously proceed from other causes;—it is therefore a fallacious resolution, calculated for the purpose of deceiving the public, who have been taxed about 100,000*l.* a year by these regulations, and who have gotten nothing by them, except an increase of home-brewed beer, somewhat less than a ninth; and a decrease of whiskey, somewhat less than a three and twentieth part. A right honourable gentleman has endeavoured to persuade you that the brewery has received decisive advantages, and that it ought to flourish, though it does not: he says in the last twenty years the brewery has received an abatement of duty to the amount of 7*d.* a barrel, and the distillery an increase of duty to the amount of 10*d.*—This fact is unquestionable, it is his conclusions which are erroneous.—He concludes, that, therefore, the brewery cannot be prejudiced by the nature of the taxes; if he had said by the quantity he might have had some colour, but it does not follow that though the quantity of tax should be light, the nature of them should not be heavy. Suppose the smallest tax on a manufacture, but that the manufacture for the purpose of collection of tax was subject to be visited by excise officers; that in the process of making that manufacture Parliament had interfered under the direction of the excise officers or the commissioners, and had prescribed the quantity of each material without any reference to their quality, and annexed a certain price without any reference to the fines, and had adopted various other regulations as to the kind and quality of the manufacture—here a manufacture might be, and probably would be destroyed, not by the weight of tax but by the presumption, ignorance and folly of regulation;—therefore, instead of concluding, as he has done, that the decline of the brewery cannot proceed from the nature of taxes, he should have concluded that as it did not appear to have declined from the quantity of tax, it probably had declined from the nature of the regulation.—His next position is, that the decline has not proceeded from the advantages of the English brewer, because the English brewer he states to have 7*s.* the barrel against him.—The importation of English beer is annually encreasing, and that even since your last regulation; what follows from the two points made by the right honourable gentleman that the decline of the brewery has not proceeded from a want of protection? he says it has a protection of 7*s.* per barrel, that it has not proceeded from a distaste to malt, for it is imported copiously,

and that it does not proceed from the tax overwhelming it with a weight of duties: whence then can this decline proceed but from himself—from those very regulations which attempted to enact a receipt for making beer wherein the officers of the revenue write a receipt for the brewers, and then get Parliament to inscribe this nostrum into a law, and afterwards make the brewer swear to it.

The right honourable gentlemen who rose to support his right honourable friend with the answer to a bill in equity, is a new evidence against the right honourable gentleman's regulations; for he tells you, that the brewer may make 45 per cent. on his capital: here is then a proof that it is not the discouraging nature of the trade that has caused its decline. One gentleman tells us the brewer may make 45 per cent. on his capital: the right honourable member himself tells you, that it is not the weight of duty; and the same gentleman tells you, that it is not the want of protection; and they all tell, and the accounts tell you, that the brewery has in the course of 30 years declined above one-third, though almost every other manufacture in this country has greatly increased; to what then can this decline be attributed but to the interference of Parliament—to that meddling mischief, which instead of leaving trade free—makes receipts for the carrying it on. The right honourable member has said, that the trade had declined before he undertook its care, and therefore he infers that the continuation and growth of its decline are not due to his medicines: the brewery had declined certainly; when he interfered he finds a manufacture in a sickly state; what had been the natural cure? it was loaded with two excises, hereditary and additional: it were natural to take off those excises, and try whether leaving it free, would not re-establish its health. But what was his remedy? he loads it with further restrictions, and regulations, and divisions, and oaths, and then he wonders that a trade so loaded with excises and restrictions, and regulations added to those excises, has not revived.

The right honourable gentleman has given an account of the effect of those restrictions; hear what it is?—the great evil was, says he, that the Irish brewer made weak liquor; his remedy was to ascertain the price, below which no ale or beer should be sold, and also to ascertain the quantity of malt and hops which at all times, and without reference to the quality of either, should be used in the brewery. He now states you the effect of his regulation: the brewers in order to evade his law, used, says he, bad malt and hops—quantity malt and pig hops—thus by his own acknowledgement and his own evidence, the effect of his regulation was mischievous; it was to corrupt the malt liquor of the country, and make the beer and ale not strong, but abominable:—he states also, the effect of his regulation, regarding the price; he had increased the price 5s. a barrel, which he cal-

culates at 100,000*l.* a year additional charge on the consumer, which in the course of many years, he says amounts to above a million, near two taken out of the pocket of the public in consequence of his regulation, and which he acknowledges produced an abominable malt liquor made of quantity malt and hops. —There then is the effect of his plan, as described by himself—bad liquor, and a tax on the consumer of 100,000*l.* The effect of the law is thrown by him on the brewers, who are said to have evaded it; that is, you make a regulation, raising the price of manufacture, on a presumption that you can by restrictions improve its quality: your restrictions makes its quality worse, and raises its price, and then you say it is the evasion of the regulation that produces the evil, and raises the price, whereas, you ought to say it is the folly of interfering, and the mischief of imposing an additional tax of 100,000*l.* a year on the consumer, on a vain and unfounded confidence that your interference cannot be evaded.

In further proof of the mischief of these regulations, what has the right honourable gentleman said? the brewery, says he, has benefited by the regulations of the last year: what were those regulations?—the repeal of part of his own regulations, so that stating the advantage derived from the present system is pronouncing the condemnation of the past. The taking off those restrictions has done some good, though that is not much; and it is therefore, I say, you ought to pursue the idea and remove *them all*. The right honourable gentleman says, what he wants is, that Parliament should by some law make the brewers *brew good drink*.—Sir, that interference is the thing that will prevent it—because the brewer, like every other manufacturer, should be perfectly free, unrestrained as to the kind of manufacture he shall make, unrestrained as to the quantity, and unvisited by the excisemen. I would take off the hereditary excise, and instead thereof lay a moderate duty on the malt—the effect of which I shall just now shew you. Other manufactures are not excised; nor is the linen manufactures restricted in the quantity of linen the manufacturer shall make, nor confined to one kind; nor is he visited by the exciseman.

The right honourable gentleman has stated the benefits arising to this country from the encrease of her distillery; I think he has said 80,000*l.* a year has been saved by the diminished consumption of foreign spirits, and 180,000 additional barrels of barley consumed has been added to the tillage of the country by its encrease.—He has also said, that the encreased consumption of the home spirit is in a great proportion apparent, as great quantities were consumed before that paid no duty, which now appear to be excised; it follows then from his own statement, that all advantage to the farmer, from the encrease of the distillery, is not real, and that a great deduction must be made from

his 180,000 barrels of barley:—he has stated the savings of 80,000*l.* on a supposition that more foreign spirits have not been run into this country since the encrease of the duties in the course of several years past, which is a fact I doubt very much: however, let us take it for granted that the growth of the distillery has saved you 80,000*l.* a year by diminishing the consumption of foreign spirit, and has added 180,000*l.* to your consumption of barley; but let us suppose that the brewery had encreased in the proportion of the distillery, and then see your advantages. —The distillery appears to have encreased near fourfold in the last 30 years. Had the brewery done so—first, you would have saved from 200,000*l.* to 250,000*l.* that goes out of this country in English beer—2dly, you have added whatever barley is used therein to the tillage of your own country.—The quantity of beer and ale was thirty years ago about 600,000 barrels, suppose that encreased fourfold like the distillery, the consumption of barley, or the encouragement to the farmer, would have encreased in the same proportion. We will take a given quantity, suppose half a barrel of beer on an average, you would then have consumed 1,200,000 barrels of barley; that is, you have added not 180,000 but 900,000 barrels to the tillage of the country. But there is another circumstance much stronger—a seventh added to the productive labour of the island: it is under-calculated to estimate the loss of labour in consequence of the consumption of whiskey instead of beer as one-seventh—it is more. How empty then and trifling to these advantages, held out from the encreased distillation of whiskey, appear, when compared to those solid and infinite advantages to the trade, tillage, comfort, sobriety, industry, and morals of your people!—There is another advantage that would have attended this encrease—an advantage to the revenue.—Let me suppose, for a moment, that you had agreed to my proposal of the former session, and had taken off the hereditary excise and all the restrictions, and laid a duty of 5*d.* on malt, you would have given to the brewers an abatement of tax to the amount of about 17*d.* the barrel, and you would by this diminution of tax have raised your revenue. The excise on beer and ale was somewhat about 90,000*l.* The malt-tax last year 147,000*l.*—at 5*d.* per stone, it would be 294,000*l.* that is, 147,000*l.* added, and 90,000*l.* deducted, on account of the taking off the excise; that is above 50,000*l.* encrease of revenue, by giving the brewery decisive advantages, and by diminution of tax;—add to this a saving, which might be made by reducing the number of officers. The number of inland excise officers appeared on a return a year or two ago to be 840; in 57 they were 400 only: these 840 officers have perhaps 40*l.* a year salary; but their perquisites are more perhaps than double; this will make the collection of the inland excise from 70 to 80,000*l.* a year, from the expence of these officers,

without including various other great expences, and other officers concerned therein. Now, Sir, simplify your collection, and dismiss one half of your officers:—you lay half duties, partly a malt-tax and partly an excise; and you have a distinct set of officers for each, that is, you have a double establishment, very convenient to patronage, very inconvenient to the country.

You are told, that the number, great as it is, is insufficient for the present system; and this is made an argument for continuing it:—you are told also, that your malt tax is not well collected, and that you are to prepare for a new host of revenue officers—a decisive argument this for the adoption of my system, which proposes one moderate tax to be collected by one set of officers, instead of the present system of malt tax and excise requiring two sets of officers, and which the right honourable gentleman allows to be ill-collected by both.

A right honourable gentleman excuses the growth of revenue officers by the imposition of two taxes—the excise on tobacco, which produced nothing—and the malt tax, which, while attended with the drawback, produced next to nothing: thus the two taxes, under which he justifies the encrease of the revenue officers, have produced hitherto little else but revenue officers.

Sir, this encrease, of revenue I have mentioned would have left the loan precisely as it was when you thought it sufficient, and would have added so much to the ordinary revenue, as to have enabled this House to have taken off a great number of taxes, which oppress the poor: if added to the present annual surplus, it would have amounted annually to such a sum as to have enabled you to make an effectual reduction of oppressive taxes;—compare this project, I say, with that miserable measure of the last session, which is the subject of your resolution—a measure, which by your own papers, has diminished the consumption of whiskey only a three-and-twentieth part, and has advanced your breweries only a ninth, after they had declined one-third; and for these splendid advantages has made the public pay 100,000*l.* per annum.

A right honourable gentleman has said, he does not rely on the witnesses, but on the papers; the evidence, says he, is partial; the evidence of the distillers has proved their trade to be flourishing; and the evidence of the brewers, that were examined to impeach the petition, has not proved the brewery to be in a flourishing state, either by their allegation or resolution; but I agree with the honourable gentleman, and therefore propose the following resolutions, extracted from your own accounts—and you can have no other parliamentary ground before you.

1. Resolved, that it appears to this committee, that, in 7 years, from the year 1763 to the year 1770, the total amount of spirits distilled within this kingdom was 4,670,975 gallons.

2. Resolved, that it appears to this committee, that, within the same period, the total amount of the ale and strong beer brewed within this kingdom was, 3,888,347 barrels.

3. Resolved, that it appears to this committee, that, in the 7 years, from 1770 to 1777, there was an encrease in the quantity of spirits distilled within this kingdom amounting to 2,064,165 gallons.

4. Resolved, that it appears to this committee, that, within the same period, there was a decrease in the quantity of ale and strong beer brewed in this kingdom of 3,787,582 gallons.

5. Resolved, that it appears to this committee, that, in the seven years from 1777 to 1784, there was an encrease in the quantity of spirits distilled within this kingdom, over that of the preceding 7 years, amounting to 3,787,582 gallons.

6. Resolved, that it appears to this committee, that, in the same period, there was a decrease in the quantity of beer and ale brewed in this kingdom, amounting to 2,538 barrels.

7. Resolved, that it appears to this committee, that, in the 7 years from 1784 to 1791, there was an encrease in the quantity of spirits distilled within this kingdom, over that of the preceding 7 years, amounting to 6,203,691 gallons.

8. Resolved, that it appears to this committee, that, in the same period, there was a decrease in the quantity of ale and strong beer brewed in this kingdom, amounting to 331,679 barrels.

9. Resolved, that it appears to this committee, that the quantity of spirits distilled within this kingdom, in 7 years, ending 25th of March, 1791, is more than three times greater than the quantity distilled in 7 years, ending 25th of March, 1770, and that the quantity of ale and strong beer brewed in this kingdom in seven years, ending the 25th of March, 1791, is more than one-third less than the quantity brewed in 7 years, ending the 25th of March, 1770.

Barrels.

10. Resolved, that the quantity of home-made spirits in the three quarters ending Christmas 1790, was	}	2,297,986
And in the three-quarters, ending Christmas 1791, was		
		2,202,182

A decrease in corresponding quart gallons, (somewhat less than a three and twentieth part.)	}	95,804
11. Resolved, that the quantity of ale and strong beer brewed in this kingdom, in the three quarters, to Christmas 1790, was		
And threequarters, to Christmas 1791,		386,838

Increase, (or a ninth part.)

40,000

12. Resolved, that it appears to this committee, that the quantity of spirits distilled within this kingdom, in the last three quarters of a year to Christmas 1791, though less than that distilled in the corresponding three-quarters to Christmas 1790, is nearly equal to the quantity distilled in the whole year 1788, and greater than that distilled in any whole year preceding 1788.

Mr. BERESFORD conceived the object of the committee was to enquire into the consumption of the country at large, without any distinction of foreign from home-made beer or spirits. The general complaint which had given rise to the regulations, was against "the excessive use of spirituous liquors," by which "the consumption of malt liquors had been diminished." Now as the statements of the resolutions shewed that the consumption of spirits had decreased, and that of malt liquor encreased, they were perfectly proper for the committee to agree to. The comparison of distillery between last year and the preceding was said to be fallacious, as the distillery of 90 was said to be much greater than that of any year previous to 88; but the evidence that had been given sufficiently cleared up that, by shewing there was not a greater quantity distilled in this year—but that more of what was distilled had been brought into public view. He then entered into a minute detail of the various laws that had been made in order to make the distiller account with the public for the full quantity of spirits distilled, and shewed the comparative efficacy of each; from the whole he deduced this inference—that a comparison of the quantity distilled at present with any period before 88, must be fallacious, and that a comparison with the last year is the most certain method of estimating the encrease or diminution of the quantity distilled.

Hon. DENIS BROWNE thought the efficacy of a law in force only since September last, could not be well judged of;—if, however, a judgment were to be formed it appeared from arithmetical statement, that the consumption of spirits was lessened, and of malt liquor encreased, and as these were in his opinion the objects of the regulations they must appear, so far, to have had the desired effect.

Mr. MAXWELL, from the order for appointing the committee, inferred, that it was their object as well to examine what advantage the brewery had received, as whether the general consumption of spirituous liquor had been repressed.

Mr. BERESFORD said, that judging of the regulations even with respect to the Irish brewery they would be found to have been useful. It was clear as the sun at noon-day that the backward state of the brewery did not arise from the encreased consumption of spirits, nor from the encreased importation of English beer—but from the bad quality of the drink.—If it

arose from the importation of English malt liquor the requisition of the brewer, that heavier duties should be laid on that importation, would be reasonable—but it was obvious their wish was to preclude all competition by shutting up the market against all good foreign drink that they might go on making such liquor as the people will not drink while they can get any other;—the true and only way he was convinced, by which the brewery could be improved, was to compel by whatever means the brewer to make good drink—to preclude competition and leave them in secure possession of the market would be a measure of most dangerous tendency as it would infallibly attach the people still more to the use of spirits.

The other part of their complaint, that the dearness of malt was owing to the distillery, had been proved groundless by the evidence of Mr. Walker, a distiller, by whom the quantity of malt had been so rapidly increased in one county, that in four years, from being unable to supply his distillery with a sufficient quantity, it was now enabled to send away a large redundancy. —The desire of the brewers that the market should be narrowed, in order to increase the quantity of malt, he treated as ridiculous and narrow-minded, and thought that neither this nor any of their requisitions could be complied with, without public injury —if it was an object to encourage making, both the brewery and the distillery should be encouraged for that purpose; and he thought gentlemen might go much farther in encouraging the distillery than they had done.—He mentioned the example of England, where a bounty of 3*l.* 12*s.* per ton is paid on spirits exported;—he hoped that this measure would be taken up by parliament in a future session;—he should himself have brought forward before now some proposition on this subject, but that he had not yet been able to ascertain precisely in what manner the English bounty is paid.

Mr. GRAYDON asserted that the object of the regulations was not only to promote the consumption of malt liquors in preference to spirits, but also to give encouragement to the home-brewery against imported malt-liquor.—He entered into a statement of the comparative imports of malt liquor at different periods, to shew the importance and necessity of encouraging the home-brewery.

	Barrels.
On an average of 7 years previous to 1790, the annual import of malt liquor was,	71598
For the three quarters, ending Christmas 1791, the import was,	88456

The sum sent annually out of the kingdom for malt liquors according to Mr. Graydon's statement, was not less than 160,897*l.* estimating the average price of the liquor at 35*s.* the barrel.

It was certain that the English brewer must have some capital advantages to enable him to undersell us in our own market, with all the disadvantages of freight, commission, &c. something substantial should be done for the Irish brewer to enable him to meet his British competitor—as to the distillery, the House were not so much at liberty—for no heavy duty can be laid on without injuring foreign trade, and a relative proportion must always be observed between the duty of foreign and domestic spirits—but no such impediments prevented them from giving to the brewery the decisive protection which it needs. He hoped gentlemen would revolve this subject seriously in their minds before next session—that they would not fasten their attention on little objects of strife, but apply seriously, in this instance, to promote the general welfare of the country.

Mr. BERESFORD agreed as to the magnitude of the object; but the great consideration was to find means thus to encourage the brewery—the honourable gentleman had suggested none.

The CHANCELOR OF THE EXCHEQUER did not controvert the position that the home-brewery should be supported against imported liquor—but the reasoning did not apply in this instance—for the object of the regulations was to diminish the consumption of spirits by promoting that of malt liquors;—the first was the primary object—the other was but secondary and subservient;—it was therefore right for the committee to compound the imported with the home-brewed beer in their enquiries;—he granted indeed it would be better if the whole consumption were of Irish beer—but it was better it should be of any beer, foreign or home-made, than that the people should still continue in the use of spirits. To prove that the profits of the brewer were fully adequate to enable him to make good drink he recited a record from Chancery, by which it appeared that four partners entered into the brewing business, three or four years back—one of them having a capital borrowed from the others, for which he paid interest—the capital of the company was 6,000*l.* and on sharing profits at the end of four years, it was found that the poorer partner's share of profits was 1200*l.* besides his having paid 180*l.* yearly for the interest of his debt. Another shortly died after, and his profits on a capital of 1500*l.* amounted to 2,500*l.*; thus the profits it appeared were 46 or 50 per cent.

Mr. BROWNE (of the College) gave notice that he would, on this evening, bring on a motion relative to the increased influence of the crown in that House.

Major HOBART said, if the honourable gentleman brought forward such a motion, it must be discussed of course; but with

the permission of the House, he would move that the order of the day should be first gone through.

Mr. BROWNE said, one object of the motion was to prevent that right honourable gentleman from thus saying that he would do so and so.

Mr. HOBART replied the remark of the honourable gentleman was perfectly unnecessary, for he had said he would do so with the permission of the House.—The honourable gentleman then, disposed as he was to find fault, had not been correct in this instance.

Mr. BERESFORD's resolutions passed without a division.

Reported the spirit license bill; ordered to be engrossed,

Mr. JOHN WOLFE moved for leave to bring in a bill to regulate the baking trade—Leave given.

Went into a committee on the bill to prevent the excessive price of coals in the city of Dublin; Mr. Graydon in the chair.

TUESDAY, MARCH 6, 1792.

After some cursory business Sir HENRY CAVENDISH rose to observe, that by the indulgence of the House strangers were admitted into the gallery, and it had been the opinion of several gentlemen, that persons in the gallery might take notes. This he denied; for it was against the rules and orders of the House for any person to take notes; and he gave notice, that should he observe any person offending in that particular, he should move for his being taken into custody by the Serjeant at Arms; but he made no motion on the subject.

Mr. BROWNE (of the College) after prefacing his motion by animadverting on the conduct of Administration in pursuing that dangerous and unconstitutional system which they had laid down and strictly adhered to, of creating influence, he particularly adverted to the appointment made by Government to the office of weigh-maker of Cork, which had been divided into three parts, and bestowed on members of parliament, for the purpose of creating parliamentary influence. This office, he said, had been long enjoyed by the corporation of Cork, and they had been unjustly deprived of it for the purpose of the present Administration obtaining an undue parliamentary influence. Having gone at some length into the subject, and having severely reprobated the conduct of Administration in this business, he

moved, "for leave to bring in a bill to repeal an act which was past last session of parliament, for weighing butter, hides, and tallow, and for appointing a weigh-master for the city of Cork,"

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER opposed the motion, on the ground of its being an insult on the crown.

Colonel HUTCHINSON said—I shall vote for the introduction of this bill—otherwise from my conduct last session, I should be inconsistent indeed—At that period I opposed the enacting of the present law as strenuously as I was able, and I probably should have moved for its repeal now, were I not hopeless of success—I fear that the division on this night will justify my conjecture—I claimed this office then, for the corporation of Cork—I claim it now; I never shall cease to claim it, whenever the opportunity occurs, as long as I have a seat in these walls, I believe the corporation of Cork have a common law right to this office; but I am sure that in equity, and in reason, they have an irresistible claim—I ask why should they be an exception to a general rule? If other corporations have the power of granting this office, why should they be deprived of it? Are the loyal, the affectionate, the deserving inhabitants of the second city in the kingdom to be treated with this indignity? and when Dublin, Belfast, and Waterford, and even the most petty borough in Ireland are suffered to regulate their own weights and measures, and appoint their own weigh-masters, is the city of Cork alone to be deprived of the power by the violence of an act of parliament?

Sir, I had the honour to present to the House, last session of parliament, a petition on this subject—That petition states, that it was the intention to make a threefold division of the office—to allot one-third for the performance of the duties of it, another third for widening the streets and opening the avenues leading to the town, and the last, for the improvement of the harbour—These certainly are great public purposes; and when the situation and importance of that great city, which I have the honour to represent, shall be impartially considered they will be found to be not local, but national objects.

The Right Honourable Mr. GRATTAN said, he would follow the example of the last gentleman but one in being extremely short; but not in supposing that his honourable friend wished to gratify any favourite passion of abusing ministers—it never had been his practice—but when he arraigned them for a corrupt exercise of the patronage of the crown, surely he was well-founded; surely he was well-founded in stating facts which nobody can deny. [Here Mr. Grattan repeated and enforced the arguments and facts stated by Mr. Browne]. He thought, therefore, the animadversion made use of by the Chancellor was too severe; for it was no reflection on the crown, to say that its ministers had imposed on it, to make the grant of a divided place to three members of parliament for the purpose of in-

fluence. He spoke not as to the gentlemen named in the patent, personally, he highly respected them; but he had a right to infer the intention of the grant from its obvious tendency.

Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY reprobated the conduct of administration in obtaining influence. In the present instance they split the office into three, and it was bestowed on members of parliament. He observed, that before this grant, administration had already one hundred and ten placemen and pensioners, and that was sufficient to carry any measure they might want without creating this additional influence; but it was carrying on that system which they established, and it was the instruments by which the ministers of the crown were governing this country, a system which, if not resisted, must in the end overthrow the constitution. He here contrasted the conduct of the House of Commons of England with the conduct of the House of Commons of Ireland; in England, there is a place bill, and a pension bill, and there the servants of the crown are responsible for their conduct; but he asked, how has it been in the House of Commons in Ireland? A place bill has been proposed, it has been rejected, and the minister has multiplied places; a pension bill has been proposed, it has been rejected, and the minister grants additional pensions; a responsibility bill has been proposed, it has been rejected, and the minister of the crown lavishes away the public money.

He stated, that the gross revenue of the country amounted to about one million six hundred thousand pounds, and one-eighth of that was divided amongst members of parliament. He said, that this system of creating influence should be resisted, and the motion made by his honourable and learned friend had his decided assent.

Mr. S. MOORE contended, that in order to have a strong government, influence was necessary.

Sir HENRY CAVENDISH considered the question as unnecessary. He said that administration ought to be applauded; the present administration, from every thing he could hear, was popular, and the opposition were unpopular. He made some allusions to what had fallen from Mr. Ponsonby, and on that gentleman's rising, there was a cry from the treasury bench of Spoke, spoke.

Mr. STEWART (Killymoon) moved that Mr. Ponsonby should have leave to speak a second time on this debate.

Mr. BERSFORD opposed the motion, as militating against the order of parliament.

On the Speaker's putting the question on Mr. Stewart's motion, the House divided, when the numbers were,

For the motion - 52 ——— Against it - 112

Tellers for the ayes, Mr. Browne and Mr. Egan; for the noes, Sir Henry Cavendish and Mr. Moore.

Mr. BROWNE said, in reply, that he had brought forward the motion in two lights, as injurious to parliament, and as injurious to commerce, as increasing the influence of the crown in parliament, and as destroying the interests of a great commercial city. In the former light it was an addition of three to fourteen new places given to members of parliament, for the purposes of corruption within these last four years. Influence had always been enormous in this country, no place bill, no pension bill, no restraining laws to controul it in this country as in England; with one unresisted ravage it had desolated the freedom of parliament, and absorbed in its mighty gorge half the representation of the nation—There was a hope however, that it might be at length exhausted, that the invention of corruption might sink under the weight of demand, that nature might set bounds where vice did not, that impotency might at length follow from depravity; the hope was vain—from the time of the regency it acquired new strength, an infinity of new places were created—and all of them poured upon members of parliament;—if it rained mitres, said Sancho, not one of them would fit my head—it did rain mitres or something as good, and not one of them would fit any head, but that of a member of parliament.

All this time however, though Government had created useless places, it had not perverted useful ones; it had not made the useful institution of the merchant subservient to the dangerous institutions of administration; it had not sacrificed the interests of a great commercial city to the interest of the minister; that consummation remained for the last summer—*Finis Coronat opus.* in the last summer, the place of weigh-master of Cork because vacant by the expiration of an act of parliament; that great city represented that the place had been wrongfully and forceably wrested from them in the year 1723, without charge and without crime; the illustrious chancellor of the time (Lord Middleton) had boldly and warmly reprobated the measure, as iniquitous in itself, injurious to trade, and pernicious to parliament: he remonstrated in vain—but though parliament had torn the scales from the corporation, it had not thrown into them the weight of the crown; it had not furnished the crown with a weapon against itself: the acts always promised that after the next turn it should be restored to the city; it remained for modern times to give it to the crown; and then for the advisers of the crown to give it to members of parliament as an instrument of bribery.—It is true, that city said, Give us the place, we will bestow one-third of its

profits to the deepening of our river, and one-third to widening our streets, and ornamenting our city.—It is true, they said, Give us the place for it is ours, and it has been taken from us by force—it will add to your own fame—it will add to our wealth—it will add to the honour of the kingdom.—True, said Government; but will it add to our government? will it get us a vote?

Fame, Wealth and Honour, what are you to Love?

To the love of pelf—to the love of patronage—to the love of corruption!

Such was the measure he reprobated, and such was the system of which it made a part, a system, which said, bribery was government, and corruption the art of ruling, a system of weak and wicked men inadequate to the true principles of government, and substituting for the affections of a virtuous people, the caresses of a vicious oligarchy. He said he meant no disrespect to the gentlemen concerned; he only lamented to see three honourable gentlemen turned into butter merchants; three weighers of the national interest into weighers of tallow; such was the effect of the magic hand of the minister: one might expect to have found influence in the grandeur of the custom-house or the extent of the barracks, but who would have looked for it in a firkin of butter?

He then adverted to some observations made on the other side; first its being said that the people were not with opposition; he denied the fact; the honourable gentleman he said, lived too much in the warm regions of flattery, to feel the breath of the people, but if it were so, why is it? Because the temperance of parliamentary opposition does not keep pace with popular resentment; because we hope to satisfy the wishes while we moderate the excesses of the democracy; the silence of the people is a fallacious calm, it is a sullen silence; it is like the silence of nature before a storm. Ministers may think every thing is quiet, because they have housed themselves in the warm recesses of the treasury, and do not hear the blast that howls abroad; or they may walk abroad and find it still; and therefore say, all is well—while the stillness, is the stillness of death; it is, as it were, the approach of the earthquake—the air is still, the breeze does not move the trees—but destruction is pent in the bowels of the earth, and the fallacious calm presages impending convulsion.

I am not speaking the language of declamation, I am speaking the language of conviction; I believe there is no man who thinks at all, that does not see this country approaching to some grand crisis; I hope not to union, nor to war, but to reformation—produced, not by the violence of the people, but by its weight operating in parliamentary and constitutional modes. But if our repeated endeavours to check the growth of influence do not succeed, what may be brooding in the womb of time I know not, but who has viewed these modes of government uniting, fierce, contending parties; who

has seen the general indignation at such proceedings inducing men to forego every prejudice, and sacrifice every passion to the thirst for reform, that does not if these things go on, see doubt and darkness hanging upon futurity, that does not see danger and confusion ready to usher in another century, and discord rejoicing in the calamities of your children!

What is the support of your government? Money! you rest upon paper; if that should shrink under the moist finger of time, you vanish: so sunk the government of France, it rested not in the affections of the people, it rested in revenue. There are three modes of government, says Tully, by affection, by confidence, and by admiration. Are these the supports of the present government? Are they loved? no! Are they confided in? no! Do they excite admiration? yes! But it is admiration of their extravagance and of their venality. But he has mentioned another mode, and that you have chosen—*largitione*—by bribery. It is a shallow and rotten foundation, unstable as the paper which is its instrument, and fleeting as the affections of the prostitute it buys.

He said that if the people should ever conceive that a number of gentlemen meet in a long or round room for the purpose of taxing them, for their own aggrandizement; of buying with their own money troops to fight against them; if they should consider parliament not as an assembly of guardians consulting for the public weal, but as an assembly of combinators consulting for the private purse—a conspiracy of the rich against the poor—of the powerful against the weak, met to sell them to the Crown—ready to sacrifice morals to revenue, and freedom to corruption—if they should ever mistake the senate-house for the forum, where the merchandize was the people, and the purchase their own plunder—do we think that the name of parliament will prolong its reality? *set nomenis umbra*—But it will be a shade indeed, the shade of departed virtue and ancient independence; but though the people mourn over the manes, they will not hug the loathsome corpse. A people lamely represented, idly taxed, and insolently calumniated, will be indifferent to existence, until it sinks into the mass of despotism—We have the example of Sweden before our eyes.

But it is said, influence is necessary in Ireland; if this was said in a country vigorous in a flourishing democracy, sturdy in an independent yeomanry—abounding in the republican, or disaffected to the crown, I should understand it; but when had Ireland a democracy? When did Ireland know an independent yeomanry? When did Ireland, since the revolution, shew a spirit of disaffection or revolt? Alas! poor Ireland, when thy plaintive and melancholy harp is accused of being too high toned—when thy humble and bruised head is represented, as the crested snake, requiring the weight of an influence to crush it—it is the voice of

irony, mocking thy dejected strains—it is the voice of pampered England, saying to her starved sister, you are too fat—it is the voice of calumny, charging thee with disaffection—it is the spirit of Lord Strafford, crying, these saucy citizens ought to be purged, and ought to be bled. It is any thing but the voice of common reason, and common humanity doing justice to thy humiliated state, and wishing to elevate thy parliament and thyself to the level, though not to the magnitude, of England!

He concluded by ridiculing the idea that influence was necessary in our constitution, which he called a libel on that happy constitution which was the boast of England;—he painted the times of King William, when the crown had no sway in parliament whatsoever, and yet was in no danger; and he entreated ministers to consider the encreased illumination of man, which would never bear such proceedings. It was not the world they knew in their infancy—it was not the world they knew in their adolescence—it was a world that they would no more be able to govern, than the mariner, who has always been in peaceful seas that knew no storm, could guide his bark in the ocean!

In speaking of the Government defence, that they only did what their predecessors did, he said ministerial argument soared quite above common life: if the woman defended her infamy by the prostitution of her mother, or the man his courage by the tergiversation of his ancestor, it would only excite ridicule; yet Government when they wrapt themselves in this dirty gauze of their predecessors, thought it an excellent veil.

Sir HERCULES LANGRISHE and Mr. BARRINGTON opposed Mr. Browne's motion.

Right Hon. Mr. HOBART. The honourable gentleman has stated, that his Majesty's ministers have advised an improper use of his power to appoint weigh-masters of Cork. Now, I do believe, that if ever there was one grant more likely than another to be pleasing to parliament, it is this very grant, both with respect to the persons to whom it is made, and the terms on which they hold. Over a business of the utmost importance to commerce, three gentlemen of unsullied honour are appointed to preside, and by the terms of the patent they are made absolutely independent. This conduct of ministers surely cannot fail to please every friend of the country.

Mr. EGAN spoke in support of Mr. Browne's motion. He began by protesting, that he bore great respect to the gentlemen named in the patent, particularly to Mr. Burgh, whose own and whose ancestor's merits deserved every return of affection from this country; but he could not help feeling the injury to the independence of parliament arising from ministerial influence—He

then proceeded to reprobate influence and ministerial profligacy, in a long speech, in which he was three times called to order—first by

Sir HENRY CAVENDISH, who thought he heard some words reflecting on the probity of the House, and which, had they not fallen from a young member, he would have called upon the clerk to take down, in order that the House might, if they saw proper, pass a censure on them.—Next by

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for appealing to the galleries. And, lastly, by

Mr. CORRY, for not speaking to the question.

Mr. EGAN having concluded his speech,

Mr. JACKSON said, if he thought the motion an insult on the Crown, he would be the last man in the House to vote for it; but he thought it no such thing—he thought it only called upon ministers to vindicate themselves; and if he did not feel it too much presumption in a young member, as he was, to say they were wrong in not justifying themselves, he would say so.

Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY said, he believed he would not be accused of intending, by any allusions, to inflame the passions of the people, and therefore he hoped what he should say would be accepted by ministers, as an wholesome admonition.

He did not consider the motion of his honourable friend, as so much directed against the mere act of making three members of parliament joint weigh-masters of Cork, as against the principle manifested by English government, of ruling parliament by an influence sufficient to stifle every exertion of those who stand forward the friends of the people.

Before the appointment of the three weigh-masters, there were already 110 members of the House of Commons enjoying places or pensions, a number perfectly adequate to the purposes of administration; the addition therefore of three to this number could make no very considerable difference, nor was it a matter worthy of much notice, but as it was a fresh proof that ministers were determined to go on to the entire subjection of the House of Commons to their will.

This had alarmed him, and materially, for as there was no gentleman in the country more interested in its prosperity and tranquillity, it was impossible for him to remain silent, and see the authority of the House sapped, and ultimately the constitution of the country destroyed.

In England, the constitution is guarded by a place bill, by a limitation of the civil list, by the responsibility of ministers, and

by every mode the wisdom of that country can devise; to the constitution of Ireland all those guards are wanting, and whenever they have been proposed, they have been rejected by the influence of ministers, from whom never originated one single measure for the benefit of the nation.—How could it otherwise be? The public revenue of Ireland amounts to 1,600,000*l.* a year; of this very near one-eighth part is divided among the members of parliament, and influence still encreasing. Why, Sir, there is no man more interested in the tranquillity of this country, but there is no extremity consistent with that tranquillity which I would not endure, rather than submit to the consequences of this influence.

The right honourable gentleman on the other side, called an honourable gentleman to order, for saying less than I say;—why does he not call me to order?

I protest, I do not speak as a party-man—and if I speak not truth, may that God, to whom I shall one day answer, punish me. An hour will come, when the country will endure any extremity, rather than endure the system of influence that has been established.

MR. MOORE said, whatever might have been the reasons of his Majesty for making the appointments in question, he did not believe they were governed by any regard to the fancy or approbation of the gentleman who spoke last; and that therefore he was not surprized that under his fondness for power, and impatience at its residing in any hands but his own, the circumstance should have given him offence. He said, the habits the opposition had indulged so long of charging every measure of government more or less to a corrupt motive, had made it necessary for their own consistency to treat every fresh act with the same freedom; but till they had foundation on their side of the meanness of extraction, low education, disrepute in the country, being the properties by which the friends of government were distinguished, the imputations of corruption being the rule of their conduct would make no impression: he said, the language held by opposition in support of the present motion could only apply where the influence of the Crown was excessive, and which the honourable member had experienced, on a trying occasion could not support itself; he said, the comparing influence between this country and that of Great Britain, was making that of this country vanish to nothing, and for his part he wished he could see the government here stronger, for at such periods alone were measures of real utility ever taken up, he instanced the present state of England as a proof of it: he said, it was answer enough to the motion, that his Majesty having the power, had used it in the manner he did, and that government, were the opposition ten times as much, and dissatisfied at it as they are,

would suffer neither in credit or estimation, by their feeble efforts to poison the public mind against them, for that the motives of both sides of the House were well known.

Sir HENRY CAVENDISH said, an honourable gentlemen has asked, why I did not call him to order? Because I saw no reason to call him to order; he has used parliamentary and manly language, and though I differ with him entirely in his reasoning and his apprehensions, yet I am not justified in calling him to order, because in my mind he reasons amiss or apprehends without cause, while he uses language fit to be heard in parliament.

In my opinion, Sir, the gentlemen on that side are growing extremely sore, because they have grown extremely unpopular. The people have too much understanding to be misled by them, they feel themselves grow rich, they feel themselves grow happy, and this has made administration popular, and opposition unpopular. The honourable gentleman has said, that large sums are paid to members of parliament in pensions and in salaries—why did he not discover this when he himself partook a large portion of it?—If he had complained at that time, perhaps he might have persuaded some people that a part of it was misemployed.

Sir, I think the motion totally unnecessary, as it would reflect upon the conduct of those who, gave very proper advice to the Crown—advice which should rather procure them the applause of the House than its censure.

The question being then put on Mr. Browne's motion, it was negatived without a division. After which,

Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY said—I rise, Sir, to make a new motion, and have a right to be heard.—I shall not refer to any thing that has happened in the present session, for that I know would be irregular; but I may refer to every thing that has happened in former sessions as historical facts, and to what may happen in future sessions as matter of probability.

In a former parliament occurred an event singular and unfortunate—the incapacity of his Majesty personally to exercise the functions of the crown—The House of Commons of that day did appear in direct opposition to the Lord Lieutenant: the existing government was beat by a majority of 54; but it pleased God to restore his majesty's health—and in exact proportion as his Majesty recovered, that majority diminished. While the Ministry was incapable of controuling the members of this House, their language was becoming the representatives of the people; they maintained the independency of the Irish Crown and of the Irish parliament, in defiance of a Lord Lieutenant and his Secre-

tary; but when the languid powers of that Lord Lieutenant were renovated by the aid of an English minister they courted and thanked the very Lord Lieutenant they had censured and defied; all this I well remember. I remember too, that at the time of his Majesty's recovery, ministers did intimate to the members of this House, that if they presumed to vote against the will of the Lord Lieutenant, they should lose their places;—and I remember that as the authority of ministers received strength, the virtue of this House became weak; so that, as I have said, those who formerly stood up to oppose, and to censure the Lord Lieutenant, were now the foremost to adulate and to thank him.—Was it possible there could be a more humiliating conduct?

Sir, I was one of the persons dismissed from office at that time. I did receive a message from Lord Buckingham, by the nobleman who holds the great seal of this kingdom, in which I was told, “that if I would consent to support Lord Buckingham's administration, I should not only hold my office, but receive any favour government had it in their power to bestow.”—My answer was, “that I was ready at all times to serve the King's government, but my own consistency never would permit me to support a Lord Lieutenant on whose conduct I had voted a parliamentary censure.” Let this be contradicted;—and if other gentlemen think the interests of the country are better supported by meanly fawning on a Lord Lieutenant, than by a manly discharge of duty, let them pursue that mode—I never will.

Upon Lord Buckingham's reassumption of the government, he erected 14 new parliamentary places; could any man shut his eyes against this? No.

Ever since the same measures have been pursued; every thing has been bestowed on members of parliament: Are there no other men in the country fit for office?

How differently do people feel in England? How little do they imagine the power of influence here? No sooner was it known that Lord Buckingham had quarrelled with the parliament of Ireland, than Lord Westmorland was named his successor. It was thought impossible for Lord Buckingham to remain an hour; but he demonstrated the force of influence for some months, and consequently Lord Westmoreland did not come as soon as the English cabinet had imagined it would have been necessary to send him. Their error arose from supposing it impossible for an Irish parliament to have the meanness to praise and to address the man they had just censured.

I have heard, Sir, a great deal about the prosperity of this country—Sir, no man denies that the country is prosperous: the people of this country enjoy pretty nearly perfect civil freedom, and pretty nearly perfect personal freedom—[Though it is not long since I shewed to this House, that a judge had grossly vio-

lated the latter, and they refused to censure him.]—The possession of civil and personal freedom promotes industry, and by industry a country grows rich; but what is that to government? The people of a country may possess civil liberty, and personal liberty, and yet be very badly governed, because they may not have political freedom.

I recollect upon former occasions it has been said, that the people are not discontented; but the gentlemen on this side of the House are discontented. Sir, I think our conduct has been the reverse of men who would wish to embarrass Government. What necessary measure have we opposed? Where have we shewn the temper of discontented men?

Mr. PONSONBY concluded with moving the following resolution:

Resolved, "That it is the opinion of this House that his Majesty's ministers are endeavouring to establish a system of corrupt influence in this House, incompatible with the principles of the constitution, and the independence of parliament."

The motion was seconded by Mr. GRATTAN.

It was opposed by the SOLICITOR GENERAL Mr. JOHNSON Mr. CORRY, and the CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER.

And was warmly supported by Mr. GRATTAN, Mr. EGAN, and Mr. HARDY.

On the question being put, the motion was negatived without a division.

At a quarter past two o'clock in the morning, the House adjourned.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 7. 1792.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL presented the report of the committee appointed to examine into the cause of the late fire, by which the interior part of the House had been consumed.—The substance of the report was, that the fire was entirely owing to an accidental cause.

The House sat in committee on the bill for regulating the office of constable; Mr. TYDD in the chair.

Mr. GEORGE OGLE opposed the bill, because, that in the country he had the honour to represent, there existed a respectable magistracy by whom the peace of the county was very well preserved;—the bill, then, which in effect was founded on supposed deficiency in this instance, was with respect to that coun-

ty unnecessary;—he should therefore move, that the county of Wexford be excepted in the bill.

The PRIME SERJEANT was also adverse to the bill, as it went to grant a premium to constables, &c. on the committal of persons to the gaols of the respective counties;—it was a fact well known, that in the remote parts of the country scarcely one magistrate in ten knew the difference between a bailable offence and one not bailable; and it often happened that men were committed to stand their trial for offences in their nature so trivial that the judge very often, on the conviction of such persons, fined them only 6*d.* and discharged them; yet for the confinement and conviction of every such person, the county was put to the expence of 30*l.* sterling. The bill, he thought, would tend to encrease the number of such committals, and therefore he opposed it.

The bill was also opposed by Mr. PAUL Mr. RICHARDSON, Mr. W. BROWNE, of Carlow, Mr. M. BERESFORD, and Mr. J.O'NEILE—principally on the ground of its inducing a heavy and unnecessary expence.

Sir EDWARD CROFTON, Sir J. BLAQUIRE, and Mr. HOLMES, spoke in favour of the bill.

Sir R. MUSGRAVE, fearing for the fall of the bill from the strong opposition that appeared against it, withdrew it on receiving leave to introduce another in its place to-morrow, in which the objectionable clauses should be corrected.

Mr. FORBES said, that on Friday he would present the place, pension, and responsibility bills; which, being similar in their principles, might then be debated at once.

Mr. MARCUS BERESFORD presented the report of the committee on the revenue bill.

He also introduced a bill for the amendment of the bankrupt law, which was read a first time.

Lord DELVIN gave notice that he intended to propose to the House a motion deeply interesting to the privileges of both Houses of Parliament;—he had determined to bring it forward on this evening, but as he did not see in his place an honourable member [Mr. George Ponsonby] who had last night proposed a motion relative to the undue influence of the Crown in that House, to which motion his intended one had some relation, he would postpone it until to-morrow. The House then went through a few cursory orders, and adjourned.

THURSDAY, MARCH 8, 1792.

Lord DELVIN, advertng to what he mentioned yesterday in the House respecting what had fallen from an honourable gentleman in the debate on Tuesday night last, and which, in his opinion, affected the privileges of both Houses of Parliament, namely, the introducing the name of a noble lord in debate, and as he understood that the honourable gentleman who was the subject of the observation he had to make, would not be in the House this night, gave notice, that he should take an opportunity of mentioning it to-morrow.

The House then went into committee to take into consideration the report of the committee appointed to enquire into the state of the river Anna Liffey, and the North and South Walls to the eastward of Carlisle-bridge; the ATTORNEY GENERAL in the chair.

Mr. BERESFORD said, that at this advanced period of the session, it would be impossible to get a proper survey and estimate of the expence of rebuilding the North and South Walls, but the committee who were appointed to enquire into the state of them, and also into the state of the river Anna Liffey, had come to several resolutions which he should move to the committee, and that between this and the next session, a proper estimate should be made out, and the subject taken up again in the next session, he then moved several resolutions nearly to the following purport:

That the state of the river Anna Liffey, owing to its being choaked by mud, is such, that it is highly disadvantageous to the trade and commerce of the port of Dublin, and that the walls bounding on each side of the river are in a ruinous condition.

That as soon as a sufficient fund is provided for rebuilding the said walls, it shall be vested in the corporation for preserving and improving the port and harbour of Dublin.

That the proprietors and inhabitants of houses on the quays to the westward of Carlisle-bridge, are obliged to keep the walls fronting their houses in repair, at their own expence.

That the proprietors of grounds on either side of the said river are interested, and ought to contribute towards carrying the said work into execution.

That the laying down of timber on the walls has been of great detriment to them, and of great benefit to the proprietors, and that they ought to contribute towards carrying the said work into execution.

The resolutions were agreed to; and on the House being resumed, ordered, that the report be received to-morrow.

FRIDAY, MARCH 9, 1792.

Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY rose, and said, that he hoped the House would, with kind indulgence, hear him for a few words, upon a subject not relating to any of the orders of the day.

He feared that some words which he had mentioned in the debate of Tuesday night had been conceived by a noble lord who holds the seals in this kingdom, to be disrespectful and offensive to him. The perfect knowledge and conviction which he himself had, and which he supposed every gentleman who sat near him, and who acted with him, had, that he did not in his expressions of that night intend any thing in the remotest degree injurious, offensive, or even unpleasant to that nobleman, made any explanation peculiarly easy to him.

He had sat for several years on his present side of the House. He had been accustomed to hear assertions, that he and his friends were in opposition, because they could not get into office. This they had patiently heard, though it was not founded in fact. In the debate alluded to, the same charge had been so pointedly directed at him, that he thought himself called upon to refute it. And though he was not heard [having spoke before to the question,] it was put whether he should be heard a second time? which was negatived, he found means to refute the aspersions by moving an original motion.—And in mentioning the name of the Lord Chancellor, he did so only as appealing to a high and respectable authority who knew the truth.

Some expressions had been conceived to be hurtful to the feelings of the noble lord. This must have been from an idea of what did not pass;—he did not state the whole in debate—but every one knew the events which took place at a remarkable period—and that after certain events, an overture was made by the existing government to the gentlemen who had gone into opposition to afford them support—to return or to remain with them, call it which they might, and that all previous proceedings should be buried in perfect oblivion. In stating the transaction, he did not allude to any person treating with himself as one, but to many besides him—to his connections, and not with him only his right honourable relation behind him [Mr. W. B. Ponsonby]. The proposition was, that there should be a perfect amnesty, as it was called—a cessation of all hostilities, and that all persons were to be considered as if no such matter had taken place.

He had stated that he might be in office if he thought proper, and in a better situation—he said so still. It has been understood that he had represented the noble lord as acting in the capacity of a confidential servant of the Crown. He never did. He never said any such thing. He only said, that if he [Mr. Ponson-

by] would support Government, that matters would be buried in perfect oblivion. The noble lord, then Attorney General, reasoned with him, not as a servant of the Crown, but as a private friend, upon his conduct. He represented to him how foolish it was to throw away a lucrative place—that the occasion did not call for such an act, and that it was unwise in him to act in such a manner—that if he went into opposition he would not only lose his place, but the promotion also in the line of his profession, which his situation in the country must secure. In all this the noble lord acted with nothing more but private friendship—and with very great partiality for him, but he never came with a direct message to him. Therefore it was, that he thought himself justifiable in saying, that he might not only have retained his place, but have obtained a better, if he had continued in the service of Government. It had been said that he had disclosed a private confidential intercourse with the best benefactor of his life. He said then, and he would say now, that he had betrayed no confidential intercourse. He considered the affair as by no means confidential. The noble lord was then Attorney General, and in certain instances might be directed by Government. How could it be called confidential? There never was a more public political negotiation in Great Britain or this country. He believed every man in Dublin knew of it. In a room not far from them there were fifty or sixty persons engaged in debating upon it.

As to the disclosure of private intercourse, had he done so, he would hold himself to be a base and dishonourable man. He had confidential connexions with many gentlemen in the House, they could never find that he had disclosed any part of their transactions.

It had been said he had disclosed what had been mentioned to him in confidence by the best benefactor of his life. Though he did not on the night of the debate notice it on his legs, he did so to a right honourable friend of his [Mr. Grattan] mention. —He remarked to him it was a very extraordinary phrase. Though he pretended to superiority over no man, he contended for equality with any man. He was in a situation above receiving charitable donations which the language implied. He was sure the noble lord would disdain it, for he must know that favours can only be bestowed and received by equals—that between men in different situations they may be called bounties. If the noble lord had ever said, that he was the best benefactor of his life, he must have lessened the force of the obligations which he conferred. He recalled a passage in Prior, which he had often read and admired:

“To John I owed great obligation;
But he to pay himself, thought fit
To publish it to all the nation—
Sure John and I are more than quit!”

He believed the noble lord to be incapable of any such act. And if he could be capable of such friendship, he would not be capable of receiving it. He had been for many years in the habit of friendship with him in private life. When he had left the bar, he selected him very unworthily and with great partiality of friendship, that he was sure that he would not call himself the best benefactor of his life. He was of family and property in this country; his talents, such as they were, and his industry, were his own—and he was in dependance upon no man whatever. The imputation looked as if the noble lord had laid the foundation of his political situation. He declared that their connexion never went beyond private life.

It had been understood that he had said that the noble Lord wanted him to sign a paper. He did not.—He never went into detail. He only related that Government wanted a written answer. He believed that the noble lord was as incapable of offering as he was of complying with such a request. It was told to his right honourable friend and to himself, that a written answer upon the occasion was necessary, in order to be transmitted to the British cabinet, that they might see upon what ground the government of Ireland stood. He held a letter in his hand from Lord St. Helens, (then Secretary Fitzherbert) on the subject.

The transaction he conceived to be as public as could be, as an amnesty was held out to every one who would come in under it. He hoped he had said every thing satisfactory to the noble lord and his friends, and entirely acquitted his lordship of having made any direct nomination of him to any office. He was sorry to state any thing further on the transaction—but it was necessary to shew that written answers were expected. For after the answer which terminated the negotiation, he was dismissed. It was one of the first acts of the right honourable gentleman opposite him, [Mr. Hobart] and he admitted that he did it in terms of great personal civility. He did not blame Government for dismissing him. He would do the same if he were in government to those who refused its support. That he assured gentlemen, that his enmities of this nature never went beyond the door of the House of Commons. He appealed to his honourable friend [Mr. M. Beresford,] who filled his office, whether he had ever looked at him with envy on that account?

To shew that a written answer was given, he read the following copy of that given by his relation [the Right Honourable W. B. Ponsonby] for himself, and his friends.

“ I intend to support the usual supplies and his Majesty’s government in this country. But I will not enter into any communication with Lord Buckingham. And as some mistakes have hitherto taken place from verbal conversation, this is the reason for giving a written answer.”

He declared himself sorry at having mentioned the name of the noble lord, if at all disagreeable. But he could not bear to be misunderstood or misrepresented. When he had been charged in being in opposition because out of office, he had gone so far to justify himself. He attempted to justify the conduct of opposition by saying, that they were governed at that crisis by two motives—by what they thought was due to the public, and what they thought was due to themselves. He appealed to his right honourable friend [Mr. Grattan] who never was in office, and who could not be accused of an attachment to office. He hoped he would stand acquitted towards the noble lord. He stated facts. If, in a good-natured manner, any of the gentlemen had asked him to explain, he should have done so as fully as he could have done. He supposed that the honourable gentleman [the Solicitor General] was under a mistake, or he would not have used the expression, of his having betrayed the confidence of the best benefactor of his life. He then thanked the House for the indulgence he had experienced.

Lord DELVIN declared himself happy to find that what the honourable gentleman had said would be likely to remove the disagreeable impression which had been made on the mind of the noble lord. He had mentioned the impropriety of mentioning the name of members of the other House in debate, on the ground of privilege, lest he should be interrupted in the motion which he had to propose, but which he now relinquished.

Mr. MARCUS BERESFORD would not rise to speak, if some part of the honourable gentleman's speech had not been directed to him. He had heard the subject with pain, as next to his intimate relations, these were the characters between whom he would wish the least to see misunderstanding. He was rejoiced beyond expression at the explanation which had taken place. Though the expression of the honourable gentleman in a former debate might have borne a wide construction—yet it would not bear to be construed into a corrupt motive. He repeated that he rejoiced at the happy termination of the business.

Right Honourable Mr. HOBART acknowledged that from his esteem for a noble lord he had felt great pain on a former night. At this distance of time it was natural that some little inaccuracies might occur. He requested him to recollect whether that report of the statement which represented the servants of the Crown insisting upon him to sign a paper for the purpose of transmitting to the British cabinet was strictly true?

Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY explained that he had been requested to give an answer in writing—not to sign any instrument of association.

Mr. W. B. PONSONBY rose to say, that he had received from Mr. Fitzherbert a letter, in which it was proposed that gentlemen who had voted against Administration on the question of the regency and past censure, might, if they chose, come in under an amnesty, and every thing was to be perfectly obliterated; this letter, however, required a written answer, in order to be transmitted to his Majesty's ministers in England to ascertain them how Administration was to be supported in this country.

Right Honourable Mr. GRATTAN remarked, that the explanation given by the honourable gentleman was read, the purport of what had fallen from him upon a former night, and he thought it handsome and proper in him, as misconstructions had been made. Had the noble lord, however, sent down any message to the House, it would not be read by any person without being guilty of a breach of privilege. He did not know of any of the transactions of the House, and even if present he was supposed to be absent. He could only proceed by a complaint to the body of which he belonged. The honourable member had explained only from notions of private respect. The propriety of this doctrine was apparent in the present instance, which shewed the impropriety of persons not members interfering with the debates.

The House adjourned till Monday next.

MONDAY, MARCH 12, 1792.

The SECRETARY OF STATE requested the attention of the House to a subject which appeared to him to be of considerable magnitude, as it concerned not only the health, but the agriculture and manufactures of the country. An act of parliament had passed on this subject many years since, under which three very able professors were elected, two of them men of great celebrity in their profession;—though the funds were very ample, for forty years these professorships had produced no advantage to the public; which he mentioned without intending the smallest imputation upon the memory of any of those gentlemen.

The failure was occasioned from the want of clinical lectures, by which, in the mean time, the school in Edinburgh had become the best in Europe. This defect was endeavoured to be remedied by the two acts of parliament lately brought in upon that subject; but he found that these had been lately omitted. From the characters of the present professors, who were certainly very able men, he hoped that good reasons would be assigned for this omission.

He desired that nothing that fell from him should be considered as the smallest imputation on any of those gentlemen—

but that he thought it his duty to move for a committee to enquire into the execution of those laws, particularly so far as they related to clinical lectures—which he explained to mean lectures given to the student on that particular case, in consequence of an attendance at the bed-side of the patient.

The committee was appointed, and ordered to meet on Wednesday next.

Read a third time and passed, the bill for the better encouragement of marines.

Mr. CHARLES O'NEILL, after stating the oppression that frequently resulted from the facility with which attachments, &c. are obtained in county courts, moved leave to bring in a bill for abridging the jurisdiction of county courts. Leave given, and the bill was presented forthwith, and read a first time.

Read a third time, and passed, the Kinnegad road bill.

Also the Lough-erne navigation bill.

A bill from the Lords; to prevent frauds in the collection of tolls, being read a first time,

Mr. P. SMITH called on the representatives and friends of the cities and corporations of the kingdom, to pay particular attention to this bill—It was calculated, he said, to smooth the way for prosecution against those corporations, and to give infinite trouble to their officers and magistrates—He hoped therefore that the bill would be printed and sufficient time given for the remote towns to consider it and petition against it, if it should be thought necessary—ten days, he thought, would be little enough for this purpose.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL thought the bill a good one, and so simple as to be within the obvious comprehension of the plainest judgment in the House. Its only object was to enable the owner of any goods or merchandise that should be seized for toll, to apply to the mayor or other magistrates of the corporation, requiring him to signify by a certificate, whether the officer seizing acted with his concurrence or not? which certificate, if the magistrate should refuse to give, it should be lawful to join him with the officer in a suit at law, and he should be responsible to the complainant. This measure he thought highly useful, for to his own knowledge great extortion had been committed by the officers of several corporations; and when a verdict had been obtained against those officers, they had run away, and there was no person to be found responsible for the mischief that had been done.

Mr. PRENDERGAST SMITH said, there were several articles on which it was still a disputed point, whether toll should be paid or not—In such it was unreasonable to require the magistrate to become responsible for the legality of demanding the toll—A thousand instances might occur in which the magistrate could not tell what was right at a moment's consideration.

Mr. BOWES DALY was interested in the welfare of corporations—but thought the principle of the present bill so fair that he could not object to it.

Mr. BAGWELL and Sir RICHARD MUSGRAVE spoke in favour of the bill.

Mr. CHARLES O'NEILL thought it was unnecessary to consult the corporation on this bill, for it was natural to suppose they would oppose it, as tending to make them responsible for acts of oppression, the profits of which they may now share without being answerable for them;—prosecutions for extortion were now of no efficacy against a corporation, and in many instances they persevere in demands after a verdict has been obtained against them. The present bill, he observed, went not to determine what tolls were or were not payable, but merely to fix a responsibility for oppressive exactions.

In the course of this conversation, two motions had been made—one by Mr. Smith, that the bill be read a second time on Saturday next—the other by the Solicitor General, that it be read a second time to-morrow.—On the first a division took place, when there appeared

Ayes	8	} Majority 35
Noes	43	

The second reading was then ordered for to-morrow, without a division.

Sir JOHN BLACQUIERE rose to make his promised statement of the Foundling Hospital and other charities.—He observed that the pressure of public business had prevented his bringing it forward sooner; with respect to himself, he begged to observe, he was not an officious intruder, as he plainly shewed, but having taken up the matter, it was his design to persevere: the crosses he had met in the last session of parliament, only sent him to further enquiry which had fortified his design. The first step he took was to call for a return of all the children by name, their nurses and parish; and for this purpose he had sent into different parts persons he could depend upon to make inspection, and he found to his satisfaction that the officers of the Foundling Hospital, jealous perhaps of his interference, had for the same purpose sent persons of their own—He had called for their reports; the House was

in possession of both, and he should, in what he had to say, judge them by their own shewing, by their own statement, and not by any which others had made. In the present state of this charity, he contended, if a reform was not made, the charity ought to be abolished, yet was he free to confess he had such a predilection for such an establishment which seemed so peculiarly congenial to our clime—where children naturally are so healthy, women so beautiful, and men so robust, it was a thriving trade, that wanted no other assistance than to be defended from the spoilers hand, and therefore ought to be cherished.

In a political light, which he should first state, it appeared that the number of children restored to society upon an average for a number of years, amounted to about 130*l.* per annum, the expence of the hospital exceeded 16,000*l.* a year, consequently the rearing of each child cost the public above 1100*l.* ! So much for its political value.

He must now trouble the House with an abstract of those returns, not those made by any of the persons he had employed, but by the officers of the Foundling Hospital. He had hoped when the fraud appeared to him to be so much increased, that there would have been less cause for the tears of humanity to flow; but he was sorry to say, that the robbery appeared to him to be greater, and the murder not less: in five parishes 2044 children were charged as living, and paid by the hospital, and yet giving them credit for every contingent mentioned in their return, no more than 629 could be accounted for; consequently out of the 2044 children, there was a deficit of 1415. In other returns, where 11 parishes have been inspected, it appears that of 3364 charged and paid by the public, no more than 1209 could be accounted for; consequently there was a deficit upon this statement of 2155; making in both upon an average a deficiency of about two-thirds of the numbers charged—consequently there had been a fraud upon the public, committed by whom he did not know, to the amount of a great many thousand pounds a year. This was a matter of high consideration, but it was not the first with him—the care of such children as were alive and should hereafter be born was his object, and the loss of them he principally attributed to these two causes—the ridiculous and fatal idea of bringing them from the distant parts of the country, and the horrid ravages of malignant disorder. He stated the manner in which these unhappy infants are transmitted to Dublin, 10 or 12 of them thrown into a kish upon a low-back car, in so strong and pathetic a manner as to affect every person in the House. We shall forbear to mention them here, save that he ludicrously called upon his fox-hunting friends, and challenged them to say, whether in transmitting a litter of whelps of any favourite hound, better attention would not be shewn.

He adverted to the necessity of preventing and not punishing of evil, that punishment belonged to God, that we were war-

ranted by no law to inflict the judgment of death for the greatest crimes which human villainy could commit, save only as an example to deter others from doing the like. In times of the rigid austerity of the church, when general infamy was attached to the frailty of the beautiful part of our creation, the horrid crime of child murder was a common event; but since this austerity has slackened, and the weakness of the sex been viewed through the medium of Christian charity and compassion, the abomination of such crimes have scarce been heard of. On the subject of that fatal disorder to which he had been forced too often to allude, very little now remained for him to say. The proposition made by his right honourable friend the other day, of establishing a great lock hospital in the metropolis, had thrown light upon his life; but why the metropolis only? of what avail to a man that he should have health in the city of Dublin and meet disease at Kinnegad? It was acknowledged that the pestilence was ravaging the country; that it ought to be met it became absolutely necessary, and to shew that necessity, he mentioned a remedy lately adopted by some wretches, too horrid to relate.

To state these evils without proposing a remedy would be unwarrantable in the extreme; those he had proposed last year were, he was confident, as far as they went, highly proper—but first he begged leave to call the particular attention of his right honourable friends on the treasury bench; a saving of several thousand pounds a year would certainly be made out of the Foundling Hospital reform; but this money must not merge in the public treasury, it must go to the payment of no establishment, civil or uncivil; the money would not thrive, no object that it touched would prosper. The 32 pieces of silver went to the purchase of the potters-field for the burial of strangers; I wish this to go, (says Sir John Blaquire,) not to the accommodation of the dead, but for the preservation of the living;—my idea is to annex to every county infirmary in the kingdom a few wards for the reception of those deserted children, another for the reception of disordered persons, that a separate accommodation shall be made for the insane, and that a room be devoted for dispensing weekly, or oftener, medicine and advice gratis to the poor; that for these purposes the above savings shall be apportioned or divided among the several county infirmaries in the kingdom, provided the respective grand juries shall think proper to present upon themselves any sums not exceeding the amount of the above mentioned grants, and which together he was satisfied would be more than equivalent to the whole expence.—He then thanked the House for the kind and patient attention they had given him; and said, he was disposed entirely to follow their wishes; he had relieved his conscience from a very heavy burthen; he hoped he had made his peace with God, and should retire to his rest that night without a fear of having it disturbed with the

cries of children yet unborn, or his sleep visited with the shades of those innocent victims who had fallen a sacrifice to the inattention (he believed not the criminal inattention) of the public.

The **CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER** thought it very scandalous that so large a proportion of children should be unaccounted for, and hoped the right honourable baronet would persevere in his enquiries till he should find where the abuse lay.—The best way to do this, he thought, was to follow up particular cases, and then prosecute whomsoever should be found culpable—perseverance alone could do this.—General principles and general schemes, while they gratify the mind, seldom remedy particular abuses. He did not like the right honourable baronet's reasoning, when he charged the Foundling Hospital with misuse of a grant of 10,000*l.* and yet wished to grant more money to other boards throughout the kingdom, as if certain they would make a better use of it.—For his part he was always ready to give every proper assistance to plans founded on humanity, &c. but would ever be against voting large sums in the gross, without knowing the specific purposes to which these sums were to be applied.

Colonel **HAYES** agreed in the statement of Sir John Blaquiere, relative to the number of children unaccounted for, but shewed there could not possibly be any of them made away with, as the nurses were paid only for such children as they produced—and was ready to concur in any measure likely to remedy the abuse.

Major **HOBART** thought it impossible but some gentlemen should be found to investigate minutely into the causes of this deficiency;—no doubt could be entertained but there was something radically wrong in the system—As to the children taken care of in the house, he had visited them last year, and he could answer for it, there was not a gentleman whose children were better attended to. Any gentleman who should engage in an enquiry into the abuses complained of, should meet from him every assistance.

Mr. GRAYDON rose to enquire of the right honourable baronet, whether he meant to propose any motion on this subject; and **Mr. B. CONYNGAM** and several other gentlemen suggested a committee of enquiry. **Sir JOHN BLAQUIERE** said, he wished to be governed entirely by the opinion of the House; he therefore moved, "that a committee be appointed to enquire into the state and management of the Foundling Hospital—and that they have power to call persons, papers, and records—empowered to examine in the most solemn manner, and to sit notwithstanding any adjournment of the House."

The motion passed in the affirmative; and the committee was appointed to meet to-morrow, in the Speaker's chamber.

Sir EDWARD CROFTON moved leave to bring in a bill for limiting the number of passengers on the outside of stage-coaches to regulate the conduct of drivers, &c. Leave given.

TUESDAY, MARCH 13, 1792.

Read a third time, and passed, the Alien mortgage bill.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 14, 1792.

The fishery bill was read a third time, and passed.

Kilkenny road bill—Bankrupt bill—Arklow mine bill—bill for recovery of small debts, and the Maryborough road bill, were all read a third time, and passed.

The bill for allowing further time to qualify, was read a third time, and passed.

Sir HERCULES LANGRISHE moved leave to bring in a bill to indemnify persons professing the Popish religion who have neglected to take the oath of allegiance, &c. of the 13th and 14th of his present Majesty, provided they take those oaths previous to the 1st of August next.

This bill was presented forthwith, and was in substance nothing more than a clause which had been inserted in the qualification bill, but was withdrawn as being only a temporary measure.

It was read a first and second time, and committed for tomorrow.

Mr. GRATTAN rose to make his promised motion on the subject of the police. Before he should enter into the business, he would lay before the House, a petition relative to it, signed by citizens of the city of Dublin, in the name and by the authority of the inhabitants of sixteen parishes.

He then proceeded to state the contents of the petition, which were in substance—That previous to the year 1786, the inhabitants of the city of Dublin had enjoyed the right of protecting their persons and property by a guard appointed by themselves, and under the controul and command of the Lord Mayor, and other magistrates of the city, and that this power was confirmed by several acts of parliament;—that by the police law they had been deprived of this salutary power, and a guard had been appointed, subject to the controul of the minister, and indepen-

dent of the magistrate;—that it appeared, from indubitable evidence, that this guard had failed in every useful purpose—that robbery and murder were as prevalent as they had ever been, and that instances of both had happened near the stands and guard-houses of the watchmen;—that of the enormous sum levied on the citizens for the support of this institution, one half only was expended on the men, the other being laid out in reducing the magistracy to a subserviency on the will of the minister, and in creating influence. The petition then proceeded to state, that the commissioners placed at the head of the institution had assumed extraordinary and arbitrary power;—that the common men were armed for the execution, not the protection, of the citizens:—they therefore prayed that the House, taking the premises into consideration, which had been repeatedly proved by the fullest and most credible testimony, would be pleased to restore to them their ancient privilege of protecting themselves by a guard appointed by them, and under their controul.

The petition was received, and read; and on the motion of Mr. Grattan, ordered to lie on the table.

Mr. GRATTAN observed, that should he now enter into a discussion of the merits of the institution at large, he was conscious he should be heard with a very dull ear; it was however absolutely necessary to touch on a few points, to shew that the complaints of the petition were founded in fact.

Twice a committee of the House had been appointed to examine into the merits of the institution;—the first sat in 1789—their object was principally to enquire into the expence.—They had found and reported these expences to be enormous;—the consequence was that in the following year a considerable reduction was made in the expenditure. The object of the last committee was to enquire into the effect of the system—and before that committee a great variety of instances were adduced which proved the establishment to be perfectly inadequate to the protection of the lives and property of the citizens. It had been asserted, previous to the appointment of that committee, that burglaries and robberies had been much less frequent in the two years previous to 1791, than they had been before that period. It became necessary, then, to investigate the truth of this—for if the assertion was founded, the complaints of the citizens were clamour.—The committee, therefore, enquired into facts, and they found that burglaries of the most atrocious kind had been committed, frequently even in the very vicinity of guard-houses. He then proceeded to state a few of those burglaries and robberies, for which we must beg leave to refer to the report of the committee on the police of last session.

He then adverted to the arresting of citizens, and detaining them in the guard-house during the night, though good bail was

offered—which bail was refused until money was given to the officers of the guard, who then accepted the bail and discharged the prisoner;—thus the institution became an instrument of extortion as well as corruption.—Here also he quoted cases from the report to corroborate his assertion—for which we refer to the report itself.

Another complaint was, the inadequacy of the institution to the quelling of riots;—he instanced, as a proof, the riot which occurred at the Speaker's house the beginning of last year, and which the police had been found inadequate to suppress, though a guard had been solicited from the watch-house of the parish, and a particular body sent expressly for the purpose by Alderman Warren.—He mentioned another instance, where, on an application for a body of police, it had appeared that of the number appointed for the Stephen's-green division, there were not less than fifty-eight at one time deficient—and even if the number had been complete, they could have done but little good, as it appeared from the report that their arms were totally unserviceable.—He recited a ludicrous story of a wager that had been laid by a gentleman, that, from Liffey-street to College-green, there would not be found one policeman's firelock in order; and the fact turned out exactly so—some wanting bayonets—some locks—some flints, &c. &c.

The next charge was, the oppressive exactions of the officers. It appeared, he said, from the report that citizens had been compelled by the police collectors to pay money exactly contrary to the act of parliament, several houses under 5*l.* a year rent having been obliged to pay 1*s.* 6*d.* in the pound instead of 1*s.*—And by the revenue books it had appeared, that there were 150 houses paying license to the commissioners of revenue, which had not been returned in the police accounts as paying to them, though it had appeared afterwards that the police tax had been levied on those houses, though the money had not been accounted for.

Considering these instances as ground fully sufficient on which to rest his motion, he would trouble the House no further, but by moving that they come to the following resolution:

“Resolved, that in order to render any establishment for the preservation of the peace of the city of Dublin effectual, it is advisable to adopt a plan that shall secure the cordial assistance of its inhabitants.”

The ATTORNEY GENERAL said, the charges made against the police were not substantiated by the small number of crimes which had been observed during the six years of its continuance previous to the enquiry;—since the establishment of the police, the city had been in a state of perfect tranquillity, and the instances of misconduct were such as must ever be looked for while human nature continues the same; and some robberies and

riots must happen if the whole garrison were to become a night-watch.—In consequence of the enquiry into the expence of the institution, it had been reduced from 20,000*l.* per annum to 15,000*l.*—from the detection of abuses, by the enquiry of last session, the attention of the commissioners would in like manner be directed to prevent them in future.—He thought no general defect in the institution had been proved that could justify a repeal of the law, to which this resolution obviously tended;—he therefore moved the question of adjournment.

Mr. CURRAN thought the motion deserved much more respectful treatment than he perceived it was likely to receive.—No gentleman could deny that the institution was universally odious;—the strongest proofs of that odium had been repeatedly given—particularly two sessions, ago when the floor of that House which was now no more, was covered by the petitions of the people against this establishment to those whom they fondly thought their representatives.—The House needed not to fear that he would trouble them long on this occasion—he had two objects in view when he came into Parliament—either to lay the complaints of the country before the legislature, and obtain for them redress—or to convince the people they had nothing farther to hope.—The latter of these was attained, he said; for if the people of Ireland still retain any expectation of relief from those miseries they laboured under, and which had thrown them far behind any country of Europe—if the people yet entertained any such hope as this, they were indeed a besotted nation.—The petition was from sixteen parishes of Dublin, and spoke the sentiments of the inhabitants at large.—This was to him a strong argument for treating it with the most serious attention.—He knew, however, it would not have equal force with other gentlemen, and he was equally sure that any thing he could say would not make it conclusive, as he was unable to corroborate it by the offer of a pension or a place—He had not a place himself, nor had influence enough with the right honourable gentleman on the other side, to obtain even a promise of one.

Colonel BLAQUIERE spoke against the original motion, and Mr. GRAYDON in favour of it, as did also Sir MICHAEL CROMIE.

Mr. GRATTAN made an animated reply to the arguments adduced by the Attorney General against his motion; and being called to order by Lord Delvin, for quoting a line of Horace, which he considered as not apposite to the question, he asserted his privilege of free discussion with admirable spirit and happiness.

The question of adjournment produced a division, when there appeared,

Ayes — 53 — Noes 24.

Tellers, for the ayes, Captain Burgh and Lord Delvin; for the noes, Mr. Graydon and Sir M. Cromie.

THURSDAY, MARCH 15, 1792.

The Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod appeared at the bar, and summoned the House to attend his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant in the House of Lords; to which having proceeded, the Speaker presented the money bills for the royal assent; and at the same time addressed himself to the Lord Lieutenant as follows:

" May it please your Excellency,

" The Commons of Ireland attend with the supplies.

" While they may look back with a conscious pride to their spirited and successful measures for preventing an increase of the national debt, as one great cause of the extension of trade, agriculture and manufactures, which has with a rapid and uninterrupted progress raised this kingdom to a state of prosperity and wealth never before experienced in it, they know that the continuance of that prosperity would soon cease if it were not cherished and maintained by our most excellent constitution, in which liberty and order are so happily blended that every subject equally enjoys their influence, and feels his person, his industry and property, equally and effectually protected by it.

" Its preservation therefore must ever be the great object of their care, and there is no principle on which it is founded so essential to its preservation, nor more justly dear to their patriotic and loyal feelings, than that which has settled the throne of these realms on his Majesty's illustrious house; on it, and on the provisions for securing a Protestant Parliament, depends the Protestant ascendancy, and with it the continuance of the many blessings we now enjoy.

" The bills which I hold contain the usual grants, and I have the most sincere happiness in presenting them to your Excellency, whose knowledge of the true interests of Ireland, and whose anxiety to promote its welfare, has been proved to us by the firmest vigilance, and prudence of your administration.

These supplies are contained in the bills which I have the honour of presenting to your Excellency for the royal assent."

The Speaker, with the members, having returned, he informed the House, that his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant had given the royal assent to the money bills.

The Right Honourable Mr. HOBART moved the thanks of the House to the Speaker, for his speech at the bar of the House of Lords, on presenting the money bills to his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant for the royal assent;—said, if he were capable adequately to express his feelings with regard to the right honourable person in question, or did he believe he had ability to convey the sentiments of the House, he would expatiate fully on the subject; but as he feared he could not do justice to his merit, he should content himself with saying, that if ever that chair was filled by a person whose talents and integrity, whose public and private character could do honour to so elevated a station, it was now so filled—[A general cry of hear! hear! hear! from all sides of the House.]

Honourable Mr. STEWART (member of the county of Down) seconded the motion; which passed unanimously.

After which the House adjourned.

FRIDAY, MARCH 16, 1792.

A committee appointed to consider the petition of J. Long, brewer, stating, his being in possession of a secret which would greatly benefit the brewery trade of the kingdom, if generally known, reported to the House, by Mr. Burgh, the following resolution:

“That if the brewers of this country were in possession of the petitioner’s method of brewing, for which he has obtained an exclusive patent, it would prove of material and essential advantage to that manufacture in this kingdom.”

Read a third time passed, the qualification and stage-coach bills.

On reading the report of the committee on the mail coach road bill,

Mr. STEWART (of Killymoon) objected to that clause which takes from the subject the power of traversing presentments under this act, except for damage; it was, he thought, an unnecessary infringement of the constitutional privileges of the people, enjoyed under the common law, and confirmed by various statutes—He therefore moved an amendment tending to preserve to the people, the power of traversing to presentments under this law, as well as in other cases.

Mr. WOLFE said, the traverse to presentments for roads was generally founded on their inutility: here no such reason for tra-

verse could lie, as the roads were already existing and no new line was to be struck, except for avoiding hills or shortening the way—If the power of a negative on the presentment was left with individuals, they would probably exert it whensoever they themselves derived no private advantage from the proposed alterations—and thus the object of the bill would be frustrated.

Some conversation took place on the amendment, which was finally agreed to without a division.

The reports with the amendment, was agreed to, and the bill ordered to be engrossed.

SATURDAY, MARCH 17, 1792.

The report of the committee on the constable bill was presented.—On reading it,

The Right Honourable Mr. CUFFE expressed his disapprobation of it with respect to the county he represented, as tending to induce on it the unnecessary expence of a police army.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL supported the principle of the bill as useful; he vindicated it from the insinuation which had been thrown out against it, as if it were calculated for a job—Certainly the constables under the bill would be appointed at the recommendation of the principal gentlemen of the respective counties, but he could not conceive that the bill should therefore be charged with giving those gentlemen a job—the men must be appointed at the recommendation of somebody, and it was a desirable circumstance, rather than the contrary, that they should be appointed at the instance of gentlemen who would naturally consider themselves responsible for the proper discharge of their duty.

The Honourable Mr. STEWART wished the bill should be postponed until next session;—introduced as it was at the close of the session, it had not been considered by gentlemen with sufficient attention, nor had they had time to consult the sentiments of their constituents on it.—The approaching assizes would give them an opportunity of knowing how far it met the approbation of those who were to be affected by it; and if the bill was likely to be an useful one, gentlemen would come prepared in the next session to give it effective support.

SIR RICHARD MUSGRAVE appearing disinclined to agree to the postponing of the bill,

Mr. STEWART moved that the county of Down be excepted. Agreed to.

Mr. HANDCOCK moved that the county of Westmeath be excepted.

The motion was opposed by Sir JOHN BLAQUIERE, and negatived.

Mr. WOLFE moved that the clause for accoutring the constables be withdrawn, but at the instance of some gentlemen he modified his motion to an amendment—allowing the provision of accoutrements, “provided the expence of the same should not exceed forty shillings once in eight years.”

A member observed that this charge for accoutrements was exorbitant;—a firelock and bayonet, he said, might be purchased in Birmingham for twenty shillings, and a soldier preserved his firelock frequently for more than twelve years, and sometimes for twenty.

At the motion of Sir JOHN BLAQUIRE the words “twelve years,” were inserted in the room of “eight years.”

Mr. WOLFE suggested whether it would not be more eligible to withdraw the numerous exceptions of particular counties with which the bill is clogged, and to limit its duration to one or two years, by way of experiment—at the end of which time the bill might be made perpetual if it should be found useful, or discontinued *in toto*.

The idea not meeting the concurrence of those gentlemen whose counties had been excepted, he made no motion.

He however took occasion to retract the opposition he had made on the preceding night to the exception of the county of Kildare, from the operation of the bill; he was apprehensive, on reflection, that the expence the bill would necessarily induce might be an inconvenience to the county.

On a motion therefore, for that purpose, the county of Kildare was excepted.

The report with the amendments were agreed to, and the bill read a third time, and passed.

Major HOBART moved that the House, at its rising, adjourn to Thursday next. Agreed to.

On the motion of Mr. GRATTAN, the bill for diminishing the high price of coals, was read a third time.

The Right Honourable Mr. CUFFE moved a clause, “that nothing contained in the bill should be construed to extend to contractors for supplying his Majesty’s garrisons, in this kingdom, with coals.”

This clause being adopted without opposition,

Alderman WARREN moved a similar one, in favour of contractors in general, founded on the necessity of several public offices—Police offices and guard-houses, for instance—and manufacturers, being supplied by contract.

Mr. GRATTAN rose to oppose this clause, as it went directly to continue the evil the bill was meant to remedy—the frauds and imposition of coal factors.—If this clause were adopted, every factor would become a contractor, and thus evade the provisions of the law.—He saw no reason why public offices and manufactures, however extensive, might not be supplied in the same manner as the houses of noblemen—but if, for their sakes, contractors were excepted, the efficacy of the bill was destroyed.—In the formation of the bill he had consulted the merchants of this city;—the provisions of the bill were framed by them after a month's consideration; and carefully examining the coal factors; and the bill itself was drawn up by the Recorder—it had therefore met every degree of caution necessary.—The clause proposed was unnecessary and pernicious, and as such he would oppose it.

Mr. GRAYDON concurred in the opinion and opposition of Mr. Grattan.

The House divided on the clause.

For receiving it, ayes	25	} Majority 10
Against it	15	

Tellers, for the ayes, Alderman Warren and Mr. Cuffe; for the noes, Mr. Graydon and Mr. Finlay.

The bill then passed.

MONDAY, MARCH 26, 1792.

The House met according to adjournment (from the 17th,) and received a message from the Lords, with the bill for preventing the excessive price of coals in the city of Dublin, with amendments; one of which went to empower the Barons of the Exchequer to diminish, at discretion, some of the fines imposed by the bill.

The SPEAKER rose and said, he believed it would be unnecessary to inform the House, that some of these amendments were of such a nature that they could not be agreed to by the House, without a dereliction of its established usage and privilege, as they went to alter clauses levying money on the subject.

He then read the clause above mentioned, relative to the diminution of the fines at the discretion of the Barons of the Exchequer.

Mr. FORBES said, he believed there could not be any difference of opinion on this point—nothing could be more evident than that the bill ought to be rejected.—With respect to the right honourable gentleman [Mr. Grattan.] who had introduced the bill, and who was not now present, he was authorised to say, that though the right honourable gentleman conceived the bill to be of very considerable importance to the city of Dublin, yet he would be the first man to move for its rejection, if the amendments which had been made in it should be thought, in the most remote degree, to trench on the privileges of that House.

Major HOBART moved, that the amendments should be taken into consideration on the 1st of August.

Several members calling for a motion to reject the bill explicitly,

The SPEAKER said, that no question relative to the bill except that on the amendments, could now come before the House; it was therefore the manner in which they should dispose of the amendments that must determine the fate of the bill.

Mr. COOKE said, that the usual way to dispose of a bill in which inadmissible amendments had been made was, to postpone the consideration of the amendments to a period at which it was likely the House should not sit;—by which means the bill was virtually rejected.

The question on postponing the consideration of the amendments to the 1st of August being put, it was agreed to unanimously.

Sir EDWARD NEWENHAM said, he had a motion to propose, to the merits of which he found himself unable to do justice; he was convinced, however, that there was not a man in that House, or in the kingdom, who would not most heartily agree to it.—He then entered into an eulogium on the conduct of the Speaker, from the time of his election to the chair, to the present period—he expatiated on the warm, watchful, and proper attention, which he had at all times shewn to preserve inviolate the privileges of that House, exemplified in his recent conduct on a bill now before them, [the coal bill] and spoke in terms of warm approbation of the impartiality with which he had on every occasion attended to the members—It must be a peculiar felicity, he observed, to him [the Speaker] to have filled the chair under an administration such as the present,

under whose auspices many salutary laws had been enacted, and a large body of our fellow-subjects indulged with very considerable privileges, under whom, too, this kingdom had witnessed what had never occurred under any administration since 1753—a redundancy in her treasury.—The motion he meant to propose he had not communicated to any gentleman in the House, as was usual, in order to secure a second, because he was convinced he should be seconded by every member present.—He then moved,

“That the thanks of the House be presented to the Right Honourable John Foster, their Speaker, for the very eminent services he had rendered to that House, and the nation, since his election to the chair.”

The motion was agreed to *nem. con.*

A motion was then made, and agreed to, for an address to the Lord Lieutenant, praying that he would be pleased to confer some high ecclesiastical dignity on the Honourable and Reverend W. Knox, as a reward for his services as chaplain of that House.

On the motion of Major HOBART, the House then adjourned to the 18th day of April next.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 18, 1792.

The House being met, pursuant to adjournment,

SIR JOHN BLACQUIRE presented the report of the committee appointed to examine into the state of the Foundling Hospital.

He observed, that this report was not so satisfactory as the committee could have wished, owing to the difference between the evidence which had been produced before them this year and the last. Some part of this contradictory evidence he stated. Last year it had been asserted by the evidence, that there were 2500 children at nurse;—this year it appeared by several witnesses, that there were not 1400. Last year the expences of the establishment were stated at 16000*l.* per annum;—this year at not more than 12000*l.* The difference between these two last statements, he ironically observed, might be accounted for by a circumstance which had transpired, and that was the omission out of the accounts of a very large sum due by the hospital, because the bill was presented three days after the expiration of the year. If the House should think with him, that some serious steps should be taken to prevent the abuses which existed in this institution, he was perfectly ready to follow them in any mea-

sure they should think proper. He concluded by moving that the report be printed.

Hon. DENIS BROWNE seconded the motion—he observed that of all the accounts he had ever read or heard of, whether of East Indian or West Indian cruelty, those instances of cruelty which the report contained were the most extravagant. He was sorry the advanced period of the session prevented the House from taking any step in this business at present, but he trusted the publication of this report would prevent the repetition of these cruelties in the interval before the next session, at which time he hoped a serious inquiry would be taken up.

* The report was ordered to be printed.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL rose, and having alluded to the vote of the House of the 22d of February last, by which his Majesty's Attorney General was ordered to prosecute James Napper Tandy, for having sent a challenge to a member of that House, for words by him spoken in debate, he said he considered it his duty to obey this order. To enable him to do so, he would move, "that John Toler, Esq; Right Hon. James Cusse, and Richard Grace, Esq; be enjoined to make deposition before a magistrate of what they knew concerning that affair." Those gentlemen, he was informed, could give such evidence as would enable him to obey the order of the House with effect. And if those depositions should be made, he would certainly proceed in the prosecution when the Courts should sit. The crime with which Mr. Tandy was charged was one of the most dangerous kind, and such as every man in the kingdom should contribute to bring to justice. It was a violation of the most valuable privilege of that House—and the privileges of that House were the privileges of the people—and the law of the land; when those privileges were gone, and the freedom of debate was no longer held sacred, the constitution itself must soon follow.

He was sorry, he said, that a prorogation must so soon take place, as libels so daring had lately made their appearance as could not be tolerated, unless the House were ready to give up every valuable privilege they possessed. The present, however, was not a time for taking notice of these particularly; the time which the House was to sit was too short—but he wished it to be known that those daring publications should not pass without animadversion; the first week of the ensuing session he hoped the House would proceed with firmness and wisdom to assert their own dignity, and treat as they deserved these infamous productions which tended to make men loose the very bands of society.—He then mentioned, particularly, a publication which appeared in several of the public papers, signed Theobald Wolfe

Tone, purporting to be resolutions of a society calling themselves United Irishmen, the Hon. Simon Butler in the chair. In that libel it had been asserted, that the House had acted illegally, and that they had violated the liberties of the people.—He knew not who was the author of this atrocious libel, but it were better for the House to abdicate their authority at once, he said, than suffer themselves to be insulted with impunity.—Another of these libels, had appeared in the Dublin Evening Post, in which it had been asserted, that the House of Commons were “oppressors of the people.” The House, he was confident, would never suffer such publications to pass unnoticed, but would at the commencement of the ensuing session vindicate themselves.

The question being put on the motion, it passed *nem. con.*

The ATTORNEY GENERAL rose again, and said, that he had forgot to mention one circumstance, which he would be sorry to pass in silence. A proclamation had been issued by his Excellency, perfectly consistent with the law of the land, enjoining nothing illegal, and granted on precedent, offering a reward for the apprehension of Mr. Tandy; under this proclamation, he heard, Mr. Tandy had been arrested, and that the magistrates before whom he had been brought, had thought proper, he knew not on what grounds, to suffer him to go at large.—This was a circumstance, which, he hoped, would also be taken proper notice of at a future day.

Mr. SPEAKER informed the House that Mr. Tandy, had been retaken under the order of the House that morning, and was now in the custody of the Serjeant at Arms.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL moved, “that Mr. Tandy be brought to the bar;” which being agreed to, and Mr. Tandy appearing at the bar in custody shortly after,

The SPEAKER proceeded to interrogate.

SPEAKER. Did you see an order from this House, for taking you into custody for a breach of privilege?

Mr. TANDY. I did.

SPEAKER. Did you obey that order?

Mr. TANDY. I was taken into custody.

SPEAKER. Did you then escape out of custody?

Mr. TANDY. I am in custody, that I consider to be illegal.

SPEAKER [interrupt him]—Give a direct answer—Did you escape out of custody?

Counsellor SHERIDAN rose—He had seen a proclamation, he said, enjoining all his Majesty's liege subjects to apprehend **James Napper Tandy**—and the crime specified in this paper, purporting to be a proclamation (for he wished to believe for the honour of the government of this country, that it was a spurious production) was, that **Mr. Tandy** had escaped from the custody of the **Serjeant at Arms**.—Now the question proposed from the chair, tended to make **Mr. Tandy** criminate himself;—and he conceived that here, as in every court of justice, no man was bound to answer questions that might tend to establish his own guilt.—If the citizen at the bar, therefore, would take his advice, he would not answer the question proposed.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL said, he conceived the honourable member's objection to the question, was ill-founded.—If **Mr. Tandy** conceived the question would tend to criminate himself, he might object to it—but it would remain for the House to determine how they should act in consequence of that refusal.

The SPEAKER said, he thought it unnecessary to inform **Mr. Tandy**, that he was not bound to answer questions that might tend to criminate him.—Had he thought any honourable member could possibly have objected to the questions he had proposed to **Mr. Tandy**, he should have called on the House to direct him what questions he should ask.—He would now wait till the House should thus direct him.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL then moved, that the **Speaker** should demand of **Mr. Tandy**, "whether he had escaped out of custody?"

This being agreed to unanimously, the **SPEAKER** proposed the question to **Mr. Tandy**, who replied, that he was in custody, which he considered to be illegal, and unconstitutional. **The SPEAKER** interrupting him, and requiring a direct answer, **Mr. Tandy** said, "he would answer no interrogatories which he was not bound to answer by the law of the land."

The ATTORNEY GENERAL rose, and said, **Mr. Tandy** confessed that he had been taken into custody by an officer of the House; he refused to answer, whether he had escaped from that custody; the evidence of their officers, however, on a former day, had established the fact; he therefore moved, that "**James Napper Tandy** be committed to Newgate."

The motion was seconded by the Honourable DENIS BROWNE, who expatiated, for some time, on the enormity of Mr. Tandy's offence.—It passed *nem. con.*

Mr. GRAYDON rose to say a few words relative to the combination bill, against which so much had been said in another place.—He vindicated the bill from the aspersions which had been made on it, shewed the provisions of it to have been a law in this kingdom, with respect to four-fifths of the manufacturers, since the reign of Queen Anne; and concluded by declaring, that whatever were its merits or demerits, to him only they should be imputed, as no other gentleman whatsoever was concerned with him in the framing of it.

The Usher of the Black Rod then appeared, with a message from his Excellency to the House of Commons, signifying his pleasure, that they should immediately attend his Excellency in the House of Peers.—The Commons being come thither accordingly, his Excellency gave the royal assent to thirty public and one private bill.

His Excellency was then pleased to make the following speech:

“ My Lords and Gentlemen,

“ The dispatch you have given to the national business enables me to close the session, and to relieve you from further attendance in Parliament.

“ Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

“ His Majesty commands me to thank you for the supplies you have voted for the public service; you may depend upon their faithful application to the purposes for which they were granted.

“ My Lords and Gentlemen,

“ I have his Majesty's commands to express his approbation of the wisdom that has guided your proceedings during the present session, especially in the liberal indulgences you have afforded to your Roman Catholic brethren, by establishing the legality of intermarriage, by admitting them to the profession of the law, and the benefits of education, and by removing all restrictions upon their industry in trade and manufactures.

“ Your knowledge of the true interests of your country is plainly marked in the measure you have adopted, for carrying into effect a reciprocal preference in the corn trade with Great Britain, a system beneficial to both countries, and peculiarly advantageous to the agriculture of Ireland, that source of your wealth and prosperity. The further steps you have taken to check the immoderate use of spirituous liquors, and your wise regulations

for the charitable institutions, prove your attention to the interests of the lower orders of the people.

“ I shall firmly rely on your cordial co-operation for the support of public order, and the enforcing obedience to the laws, by which alone the fruits of national industry can be secured ; and when you reflect upon the flourishing resources, the encreasing wealth and unexampled prosperity of the country, you will not fail to impress upon the minds of the people, that the maintenance of our free and happy constitution, will ensure the continuance of these invaluable blessings.”

And then the Lord Chancellor declared that it was his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant's pleasure, that this Parliament be prorogued to Monday the 18th day of June next.



I N D E X

TO THE

T W E L F T H V O L U M E

OF THE

C O M M O N S D E B A T E S.

A.

ANNA Liffey River, resolutions respecting it, 283.

ANTRIM, freeholders, petition in favour of the Roman Catholics, 125.

ANNESLEY, Honourable Mr. speaks on the Roman Catholic petition, 188.

ARCHDALL, Mr. his observations on the India trade, 107.

ATTORNEY-GENERAL, speaks on the inundation of the low grounds, 45.—Presents a corn bill, 49.—Speaks on the Catholic Petition, 187, 221.—On the Police, 296.—His motion and speech respecting James Napper Tandy, 305, and his observation on seditious publications, 306.

B.

BARRINGTON, Mr. His speech on the Roman Catholic bill, 178.

I N D E X.

BELFAST, Petition in favour of the Roman Catholics, 82
—rejected, 231.

BERESFORD, Right Honourable John, speaks on the inundation, 44—On the spirit and brewing regulations, 267—On the river Anna Liffey, 283.

BERESFORD, Mr. Marcus, speaks on the Roman Catholic Petition, 185—On Tandy's affair, with the Solicitor General, 233.

BLAQUIERE, Colonel, His speeches on the Roman Catholic question, 37, 211.

BLAQUIERE, Sir John, His speeches respecting the Foundling Hospital, 290, 304.

BREAD, allowance for soldiers, 48.

BREWERS, heard by counsel, &c. 120, 121, 258.

BROWNE, Doctor, speaks on disturbances in the Gallery, 42—On the India trade, 97—On the Roman Catholics, 127, 128, 189, 243—On the misapplication of the loan funds, 248—On the weighmasters of Cork, 270, 273.

BROWNE, Honourable Denis, His speeches on the Roman Catholic question, 38, 62, 128, 211, 239—On spirit regulations, 57—On the India trade, 95.

BROWNLOW, Right Honourable Mr. His sentiments on the Roman Catholic petition, 186.

C.

CANAL, undertakers of the Grand, petition on the inundation, 47.

CAVENDISH, Sir Henry, supports the address to the King, 22—Speaks on the finances, 74—On the Crown influence, 279.

CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER, His speech on the address to the King, 20—On the spirit regulations, 56—States the finances, &c. 67, 72, 73.—Speaks on the East India trade, 87—On the Roman Catholic bill, 180—On the brewery, 269.

I N D E X.

COAL BILL debated, 303.

CODDINGTON, Dixie, resolutions in his favour, 48, 49.

CONYNGHAM, Right Honourable William Burton, His speech on the India trade, 109.

CONYNGHAM, General, His speech on the Roman Catholic petition, 181.

CONSTABLE BILL debated, 300.

COOTE, Mr. speaks on the Roman Catholic question, 39, 132
210, 239.

CORRY, Mr. speaks on the inundation, 46.—On the India trade, 111.

COTTER, Sir James, speaks on the Roman Catholic petition, 184.

CUFFE, Right Honourable Mr. speaks on the Roman Catholic question, 36, 187.—His complaint against James Napper Tandy, 232.

CURRAN, Mr. His speech on the India trade, 110—On the Roman Catholic bill, 174—On the Roman Catholic petition, 216—On the Police, 297.

D.

DUIGENAN, Doctor, speaks on the Roman Catholic bill, 244.

E.

EAST INDIA TRADE, debates on, 85.

EGAN, Mr. speaks on the finances, 73—On the India trade, 107—On the Roman Catholic bill, 158.

F.

FIRE in the House, 252.—Its cause inquired into, 253, 354.—Report thereon, 281.

FORBES, Mr. supports the Roman Catholic petition, 190.

I N D E X.

FOUNDLING HOSPITAL, proceedings respecting it, 290, 304.

G.

GALWAY ELECTION, report of the committee thereon, 27.

GALLERY, disturbances therein, considered, 42, 80, 256, 270.

GRATTAN, Mr. His speech on the address to the King, 4.—
Reply thereon to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, 22.—
Speaks on the Roman Catholic question, 41, 124, 163, 224,
240—On the spirit regulations, 50, 55, 260—On the na-
tional finances, 69, 74—On the India trade, 111, 113.—On
the Gallery disturbance, 256—On the weighmasters of
Cork, 271—On the Police, 295.

GRAYDON, Mr. speaks on the India trade, 95—On the Ro-
man Catholic petition, 214.

H.

HARDY, Mr. His speech on the Roman Catholic bill, 130—
On their petition, 217.

HOBART, Mr. Speaks on the Roman Catholic bill, 309, 133,
157—On their petition, 221—On the weighmasters of Cork,
276.

HOLMES, Mr. speaks on the Roman Catholic's petition, 220.

HOSPITAL. See Foundling Hospital.

HUTCHINSON, Colonel, His speech on the Roman Catholic
bill, 138—On their petition, 221—On the weighmasters of
Cork, 271.

I.

INDIA TRADE, debated, 85, &c.

INUNDATION of the Low Grounds, compensation petitioned
for, 43—Committee thereon appointed, *ib.*—Debate there-
on, 44, 45, & seq. 46, 47.

JOHNSON, Mr. speaks on the Roman Catholic bill, 236.

I N D E X.

K.

KNOX, Honourable George, His speech on the Address, 3—
On the Roman Catholic bill, 145.

L.

LANGRISHE, Sir Hercules, gives notice of an intended proposition respecting the Roman Catholics, 24, 27.—His proposition &c. 28.—Presents the Roman Catholic bill, 58.—Speaks on the Belfast petition, 82—On the Roman Catholics, 130, 209, 237, 238, 211, 246.

LOAN FUNDS, debate upon their application, 248.

LOFTUS, Honourable Mr. moves an address to the Lord Lieutenant, 24.

LONG, John, His method of brewing approved of, 299.

LORD LIEUTENANT, his Speeches, 1, 308.

M.

MAXWELL, Mr. speaks on the Roman Catholic bill, 236.

MOORE, Mr. speaks on the India Trade, 92—On the weigh-masters of Cork, 278.

N.

NEWENHAM, Sir Edward, supports an address to the King, 23.—Apologizes for his vote against the India Trade, 112—Speaks on the Roman Catholic petition, 190.

O.

O'CONNOR, Mr. speaks on the India Trade, 199.

OGLE, Right Honourable George, His speeches, on the Roman Catholic question, 37, 126, 189, 240—On the con-fable bill, 281.

O'HARA, Mr. His speech on the Roman Catholic question, 39.

I N D E X.

O'NEILL, Right Honourable John, presents a petition from the people of Belfast, 82—His declaration respecting it, 84—Presents one from the Freeholders of the County of Antrim, 123.

O'NEILL, Mr. Charles, speaks on the Toll bill, 290.

OSBORNE. Sir Thomas, supports the Roman Catholic petition, 187.

P.

PARNELL, Sir John. See Chancellor of the Exchequer.

PARSONS, Sir Lawrence, his speech on the India trade, 101

PAUL, Mr. moves an amendment to the Popery bill, 235.

PERY, Mr. speaks on the India trade, 95—On the Roman Catholic petition, 211.

POLICE Establishment, debates thereon, 294.

PONSONBY, Mr. George, his reply to Sir Edward Newenham on the address to the King, 23—Speaks on the Roman Catholic question, 42, 155, 229, 238, 243—On the East India trade, 85—On the weigh-masters of Cork, 272, 277. On the Crown influence, 279—On allusions to a noble Lord, 284.

PRESBYTERIAN Ministers, Mr. Stewart's motion in their behalf, 114.

PROVOST. See Secretary of State.

R.

RIVER. See Anna Liffey.

ROCHE, Sir Boyle, his speeches on the Roman Catholic question, 83, 185.

ROMAN Catholics, debates respecting them, 24, 27, 28, 62, 82, 124, 145, 181, 235, 246.

ROMAN Catholic bill, 58.—petition, 125—Its rejection, 231.

RUXTON, Mr. speaks on the Roman Catholic bill, 132.

I N D E X.

S.

SECRETARY OF STATE, his speech on University regulations, 288.

SHERIDAN, Mr. Richard, his speech on the address to the King, 20—On the Roman Catholic question, 41—On the same, 133—On Tandy's examination, before the House, 307.

SMITH, Cololonel, brought to the bar, 244.

SMITH, Mr. Michael, his speech on the Roman Catholic bill, 135—On their petition, 212.

SMITH, Mr. P. speaks on the toll bill, 289.

SOLDIERS pay encreased, 54.

SOLICITOR GENERAL, his speeches on the Roman Catholic question, 41, 241—His affair with James Napper Tandy, 231.

SPEAKER, (Right Honourable John Foster,) his speech on presenting the money bills 298—Receives the thanks of the House for it, 299.

SPIRITOUS Liquors, debates respecting their rgulation, 50 55, 251.

STATE of the national finances, 67.

STAPLES, Mr. speaks on the Roman Catholic bill, 62, 132.

STEWART, Honourable Mr. speaks on the East India trade, 89.

STEWART, Mr. (of Killymoon) His motion in favour of Presbyterian ministers, 114—Speaks on the Roman Catholic petition, 188.

T.

TANDY, James Napper, proceedings respecting his affair with the Solicitor General, 231, 305, 306, 307.

THURLES, Lord, moves an address to the King, 2.

I N D E X.

TIPPERARY ELECTION, report of the committee thereon, 24.

TOLER. See **Solicitor General**, proceedings on his affair with James Napper Tandy, 231.

V.

VANDELEUR, Mr. His Speech on the finances 76—On the India trade, 93.

W.

WEIGHMASTERS of Cork, debates respecting their office, 270.

WESTMORLAND, Earl of. See **Lord Lieutenant**.

WOLFE. See **Attorney General**.

F I N I

